



# **ECIU UNIVERSITY 2030**

**CONNECTS U  
FOR LIFE**

**ECIU**  
university

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY:

# NEED FOR A SYSTEMIC CHANGE

We believe that universities must jointly shift focus further towards open co-creation spaces and ecosystems to solve challenges requiring specific European multi-disciplinary approaches. The collaboration of learners, teachers, researchers, companies, the public sector, NGOs and regional embedded ecosystems throughout Europe is the key. Stepping out of the traditional silos is necessary.

ECIU University, a new European University, has been founded to help shape a resilient and more sustainable future. The ECIU member universities have a proven track record of collaboration in open ecosystems together with stakeholders leading to relevant societal impact. It is in our DNA to look boldly into the future, see opportunities, and reinvent ourselves over and over again at the European level.





# MISSION & VISION

## **Mission**

ECIU University is an agile, open agora at the European level for solving multi-disciplinary societal challenges, doing research and learning for life. We create an invigorating model of a true European University for the benefit of European society.

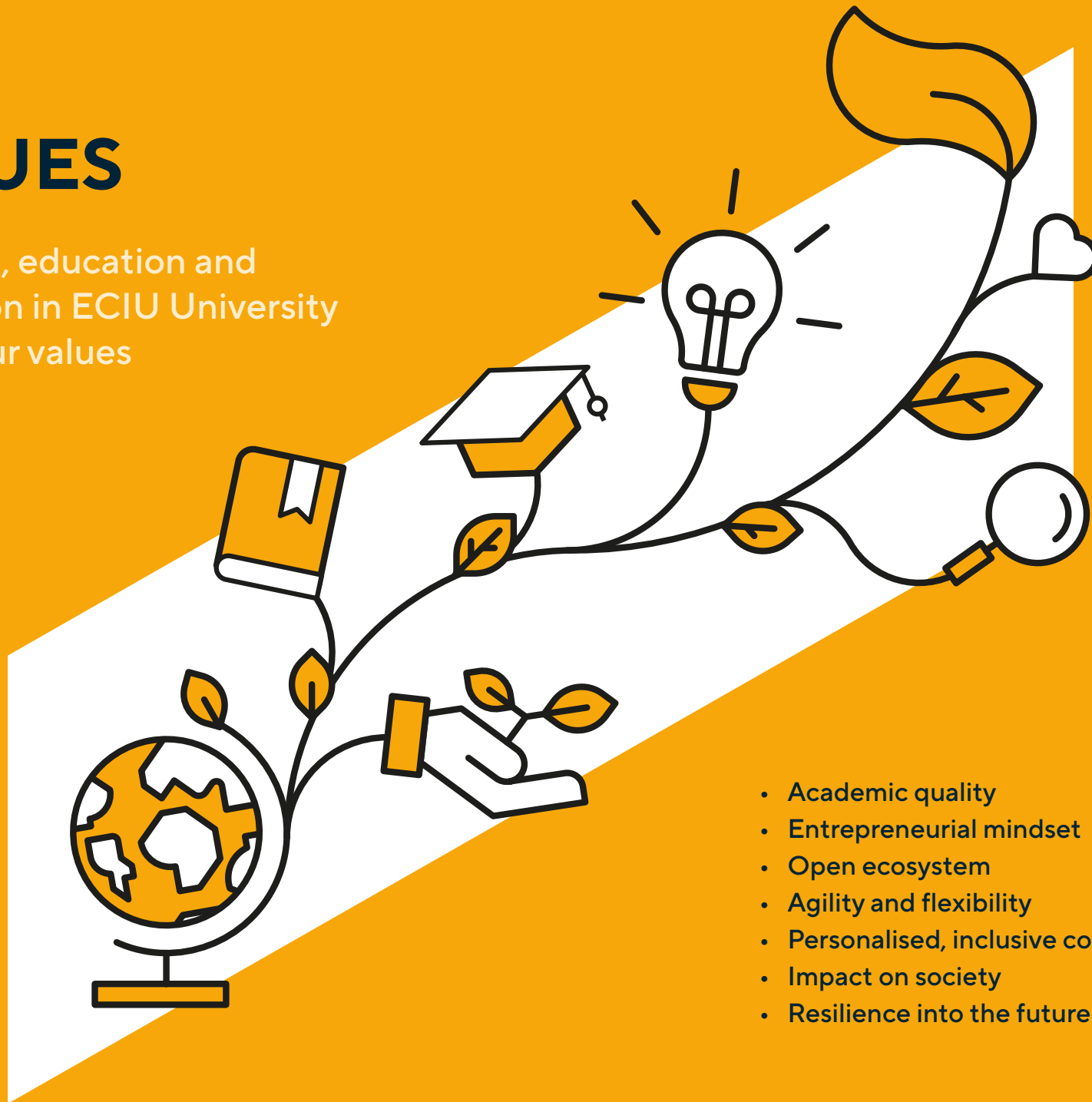
## **Vision**

We believe in a European-wide ecosystem based upon open and inclusive collaboration connecting societal stakeholders, researchers and learners to provide European answers to future societal challenges. We create a playground for solving multi-disciplinary challenges in entrepreneurial, innovative ways and provide personalised learning and career opportunities for life at the European level, enabled by a novel university model based upon co-creation.



# VALUES

Research, education and innovation in ECIU University reflect our values



- Academic quality
- Entrepreneurial mindset
- Open ecosystem
- Agility and flexibility
- Personalised, inclusive community
- Impact on society
- Resilience into the future

# STRENGTHS

- We capture the ecosystemic role of universities in society and the opportunities it provides for universities to make an impact at the European level. We fully embrace this new role by building an open European-wide gateway into the national ecosystems.
- We take an innovative approach to research-based higher education for life: personalised skills and competence development with micro-credentials at the core.
- We stand for bold experimentation in research and education by setting up a European co-creation playground for all stakeholders. We nourish strategic collaboration between cities, regions, industry, individuals and universities.
- We apply cutting-edge technologies with human touch as a tool to innovate and create value.
- We enhance agility with organisational innovations and novel, resilient funding models. We are flexible and quick to deliver.
- We stand together behind ECIU University. We are the largest European University alliance with 12 members and extensive European coverage. Our backbone is the collaboration of our member universities amongst each other and their ecosystems since 1997.
- We commit to our long-term ambitious vision of the future with clear strategic choices and concrete steps.
- We see the European Universities initiative as a historical opportunity. For us, building a European University is a fundamental change and a long-term process, not a project.

# KEY ELEMENTS OF ECIU UNIVERSITY



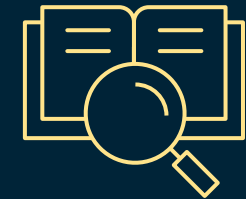
OPEN  
COMMUNITY



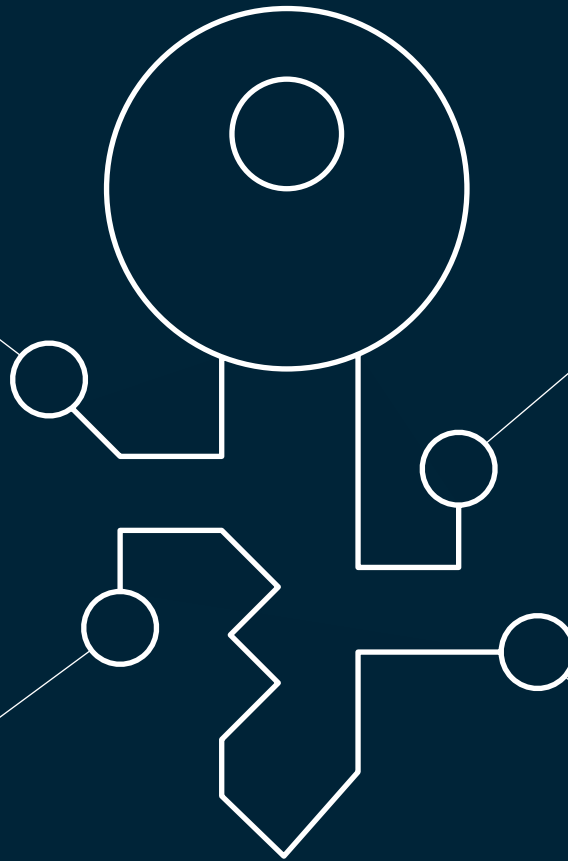
CUTTING-EDGE  
TECHNOLOGIES



INNOVATIVE  
CO-CREATION MODEL



EUROPEAN EDUCATION  
AND RESEARCH





## KEY ELEMENTS OF ECIU UNIVERSITY:

# OPEN COMMUNITY

ECIU University is based on the model of challenge-based innovation, research and education, integrating the needs of society, research and industry for personalised learning. ECIU University is a European-wide ecosystem where demands for innovation unite seamlessly with motivated individuals and teams contributing to Europe and its regions. We aim to make ECIU University a motor for innovation and impact, known for making a life-long difference for learners. The identity of our community is based on the values of ECIU University.

We believe that the role of the university is to empower its surroundings and its learners to reach their best. ECIU University is a space where communities of practice flourish around urgent and relevant societal topics, such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to help Europe achieve sustainability. The leading principles are the needs of individuals and stakeholders while stimulating collaboration in innovation, learning and research.

Together we will establish a hybrid, digitally-enabled space, which will allow communities to collaborate across boundaries. This will create real added value at scale by identifying complex multi-disciplinary challenges that offer rich learning opportunities. Through these joint efforts we will formulate new strategic research questions to drive a high-impact research agenda for a sustainable future.

In 2030, ECIU University is an agile, need-driven agora; a European ecosystem where demand and supply of education, research and innovation of the member universities and their stakeholders come together. We believe that by combining this expertise in an open hybrid space we will build a European University fit for future demands.



KEY ELEMENTS OF ECIU UNIVERSITY:

# CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGIES

Digital transformation is at the core of ECIU University, enabling innovations in education and research. In 2030, ECIU University functions as a hybrid, digitally-enabled learning, innovation and knowledge space with fit for purpose, low-cost, high-quality and people-centric services. We apply cutting-edge technologies broadly, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data, and test new concepts. Stakeholders, researchers and learners throughout Europe and beyond can use this environment to connect to each other and join our vibrant community no matter where they are.

ECIU University operates in multiple realities. The community relies on a balanced interaction between the European-wide virtual organisation, the physical ECIU member university campuses, and involvement of our stakeholders. The connected campuses and cities are living labs for experimenting with innovative solutions. The different realities are seamlessly integrated and agile; access between the virtual modality and the campuses is always easily available. Immersive virtual

environments combined with gamification provide new standards for an instant natural interaction for the ECIU University community throughout Europe. Innovative technological solutions enable us to function seamlessly and provide us the capability to adapt into changing circumstances.

ECIU University exploits far-reaching data-driven opportunities. In the spirit of life-long learning, learners are continuously guided and supported by artificial intelligence systems combining individual skills and competence data with data on the ECIU University opportunities and with forecast data on emerging needs of skills and competences in society. We use data to form optimal teams around challenges, to support networking in the ECIU University community in purposeful ways, and to find new challenges. ECIU University employs data-driven strategy as one of the drivers of the novel university co-creation model.





KEY ELEMENTS OF ECIU UNIVERSITY:

# EUROPEAN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

ECIU University is the innovative test bed of a combined European Education and Research Area. In 2030, ECIU University is a space of vast individual learning opportunities for life; research-based learning modules offered by ECIU University and learning opportunities provided by ECIU stakeholders. We provide personalised learning focused on upskilling and reskilling and thus help learners to stay intellectually fit and up to date with research-based knowledge, skills and competences with a focus on societal impact.

Education in ECIU University drives European values and strengthens European culture and citizenship. We support the development of creative and resilient European citizens with an entrepreneurial mindset, critical thinking and agility. We connect cultures, enable people to move freely, and shape the European job market by providing necessary skills well aligned with the needs of society.

ECIU University offers a unified approach to challenge-based higher education at the European level. At the core of the educational pathways are European micro-credentials, fundamental building blocks for challenge-based life-long learning pathways. Learning opportunities are tailored to the learners' needs: flexible, personalised, academic skills and competence development in collaboration with the community. Validation of a learner's skills and competences in a blockchain-based passport is an essential service provided by ECIU University, no matter where the skills and competences are developed. Education in ECIU University stands for strong personalisation and inclusiveness. We are open to all academic learners who have the right motivation and knowledge, allowing them to choose whatever micro-credential they like and build personalised pathways.



ECIU University is more than the sum of its member universities. Together we create learning pathways out of reach of a single university. At ECIU University only the most relevant, innovative and valued education of each partner is offered. We have the agility to embrace new opportunities combined with the established quality and volume of education, research and innovation of the ECIU member universities. ECIU University provides life-long learning pathways, while standard degrees will remain in the domain of the ECIU member universities.

For staff, ECIU University is a flexible and agile testing ground for novel education outside national boundaries. It is the breeding ground for new educational and research models, a space for conducting open research and innovation and connecting with multiple stakeholders at different levels throughout Europe. ECIU University leads the way for removing obstacles related to funding, encouraging European flexible learning paths with micro-credentials, new mobility and quality control, and reducing of the overlap of educational offerings and support costs.

ECIU Virtual Research Institute is a breeding ground for citizen science with long-term strategic collaborations with societal and industrial partners and citizens. It provides a solid basis for addressing societal challenges at the European level. The ECIU research agenda is set based on the needs of society with an integral connection to education.

In ECIU University, researchers conduct open research and innovation and develop a career by moving between the ECIU University stakeholder organisations in an intersectoral way. A comprehensive framework of innovative metrics are used to assess the impact of research and innovation activities to support research careers. ECIU University provides learning opportunities for researchers and a gateway to the ECIU member universities to connect as communities of practice throughout Europe.



KEY ELEMENTS OF ECIU UNIVERSITY:

# INNOVATIVE CO-CREATION MODEL

In 2030, ECIU University adopts a novel, resilient funding model for the future European University. The funding model relies on three underlying factors: full utilisation of data and digitalisation, a functioning European ecosystem with memberships, and the strategy based on demand and supply consisting of offerings by ECIU University, our member universities as well as our stakeholders and partners.

The cost structure and revenue streams of ECIU University 2030 reflect the fundamental changes in the role of the future university in society and the novel approach to the roles of learners, researchers and stakeholders. The core of the cost structure are investments in a personalised life-long learning experience with cutting-edge technology, and development and support of our community and university staff. ECIU University is a public-private entity at the European level, owned by the ECIU member universities, with the ability to receive mixed funding and revenues at the European level.

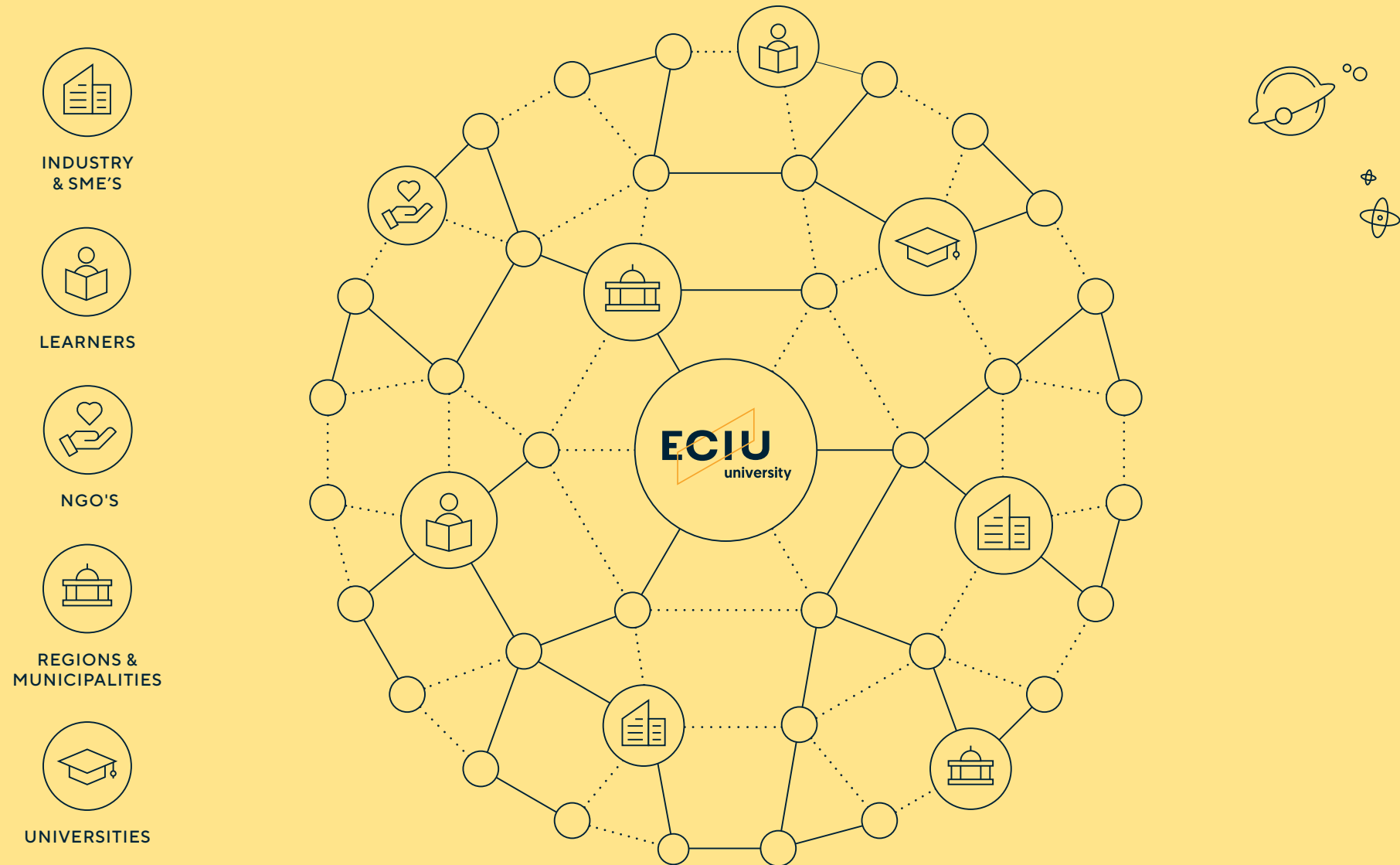
The notion of active membership is at the core of the ECIU community. We believe in creating value for our members through life-long connections. For learners, ECIU University membership is an essential part of their value chain of personal development and career planning, providing personalised and intelligent access to cutting-edge knowledge, peers and employers. Learners find opportunities to work and learn with diverse stakeholders throughout Europe.



For private and public organisations, the ECIU University membership means continuous access and participation in shaping knowledge and talent, as well as open, creative collaboration. Cities and regions are interconnected to maximise benefits of the ecosystem, and enterprises find benefits in like-minded stakeholders, researchers and learners. Particularly for SME's, ECIU University provides insights into the future and helps them stay updated and competitive in future scenarios.

ECIU University is about co-creation. We work and create value empowering our learners and partnerships. We nourish our people to step in and stand up for the benefit of the community and society, at the same time co-creating value for themselves. Our model encourages active membership in the community, as the costs of participation in ECIU University depend on the input and value the individual creates for the community and society. We use gamification in order to keep our members connected. It is an inclusive community based on efforts – the more one gives, the more one gets.

# THE ECOSYSTEM OF ECIU UNIVERSITY





# ECIU UNIVERSITY BECOMING REALITY

TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF ECIU UNIVERSITY IN 2030, WE HAVE IDENTIFIED VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT HURDLES TO BE TACKLED, FOR EXAMPLE:

- Pushing for the possibility to issue recognised higher education credentials at the European level.
- Moving towards a sustainable, mixed funding model in collaboration with European Union and national governments. Conducting experiences to understand how free, cost-based and for-profit services can be merged in a funding model that is transparent to all stakeholders.
- Establishing a European University public-private entity recognised by the relevant national and European authorities throughout Europe, owned by the ECIU member universities.
- Operating a flexible hybrid space model to ensure deeply rooted local education, research and innovation needs are catered for whilst more specialised and complex services and activities regarding flexible learning pathways will benefit and operate at a truly European level.
- Enabling researchers to work and move between the ECIU member universities and stakeholders in flexible ways.
- Developing agile digital mechanisms in order to assess and validate knowledge, skills and competences and assure them at the European level.
- Sharing and (re-)using learner data in a secure and open way throughout Europe.
- Creating European incubators to ensure a space for bold experimentation in order to infuse ECIU University with innovative aspects.
- Lobbying for the necessary legislative changes both at the European and national levels.

# PHASES TOWARDS ECIU UNIVERSITY 2030

## EXAMPLES OF STEPS IN THE DIFFERENT PHASES TOWARDS 2030

### **2023: Equipped to continue after the pilot phase**

- ECIU University pilot finished.
- Funding for the second phase secured.
- ECIU physical collaboration spaces are operational and interconnected between the ECIU member universities with Extended Reality (XR) functional.
- Learners in the ECIU member universities can freely choose all courses and micromodules from the member universities.
- Mechanisms for integrating multi-disciplinary challenge-based research, innovation and learning developed.
- Memberships of stakeholders and learners possible.

- ECIU University established as a hybrid public-private organisation, owned by the ECIU member universities.
- FAIR, open (secure and reciprocity-based) exchange of scientific and educational knowledge and data in use.

### **2024: Role of research intensified**

- European Virtual Research Institute, SMART-ER, established as part of ECIU University.
- Plan developed to extent virtual ECIU institutes connected to relevant societal challenges.

### **2025: The first version of ECIU University functional**

- ECIU University, as a single space of vast learning opportunities for life, developed and characterised by agile, personalised learning.
- Relevant life-long learning pathways of the ECIU members universities offered through ECIU University and recognised at European level.
- Technology-based support development in progress and in use (e.g., AI-driven tools, immersive environments with gamification, competence passport).
- Systematic collaboration mechanisms with SMEs involving regional impact developed and in use.

- Collaboration with enterprises developing cuttingedge technologies in progress.

### **2030: The full version of ECIU University functional**

- ECIU University agora fully functioning based on demand and supply.
- All suitable parts of higher education of the ECIU member universities offered via the ECIU University platform.
- New funding model with new funding sources and transaction model in use, including a European-level sustainable funding mechanism.

# OUR MEMBER UNIVERSITIES

AALBORG UNIVERSITY

DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

HAMBURG UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

INSTITUT NATIONAL DES SCIENCES APPLIQUÉES

KAUNAS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

LINKÖPING UNIVERSITY

TAMPERE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITAT AUTÒNOMA DE BARCELONA

UNIVERSIDADE DE AVEIRO

UNIVERSITY OF STAVANGER

UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE

ASSOCIATE ECIU PARTNER:

TECNOLÓGICO DE MONTERREY



With the support of the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

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