

WP4: Activating the knowledge square

Framework for work sessions on WP4 during the kick-off week in Hasselt. February 2024.

The present document attempts to put into a common framework what was written in the proposal submitted to the call for phase 2, and the ideas developed by the brainstorming session we had at the review week in Petrosani. This provides the global framework for the different sessions at the kick-off week in Hasselt which will be dedicated to WP4 issues. At the different steps, we also provide the agenda for each of these sessions.

Some general considerations

The first necessary step is to have a common definition of what focus we choose on RCP and to map what the partners want to address; the whole process being assessed by a strategic analysis considering long term trends and major ongoing transitions; this will irrigate all the missions of EURECA-PRO (not only research). This process has been launched by the Board of Rectors and the Steering Committee; some first views of the outcome resulted from a very fruitful meeting in Vienna on January 18. This will be the basis for identifying the targeted impact of the research in a multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary way, using three categories: Supporting public policies, Driving social changes, Contributing to scientific progress & innovation. The objective is to ensure that the focus on research and innovation we choose has an international and interdisciplinary character and lives up to the European standards of excellence, and to have a comprehensive strategy that can be explained to external stakeholders and policy makers.



The mapping which has been previously mentioned will hopefully lead to the emergence of a limited set of **flagships**. The definition of these flagships should draw both on the result of the mapping, and on results from the work on lighthouses in EURECA-PRO phase 1. We propose to limit the number of flagships to those on which we can reasonably pretend to attain international visibility at the best level, to prove our ambition to be the European University on SDG12. We should also make sure that the flagships are topics of common interest for all universities or of strategic interest for a comprehensive understanding of RCP, so we propose that not only flagships, but any activity within WP4, should be of proven interest to all the partners and strongly supported by at least 3 partners.

Why Is this so important?

Although any activity could be related more or less directly to SDGs, often to SDG12, we firmly believe that in EURECA-PRO globally, and especially in WP4, we really need to make the contribution of our activities very explicit. Otherwise, we will be at risk of wanting to “put everything we do” into EURECA-PRO and to make the whole positioning of the alliance invisible. To attain this focus in our choices, and help defining the flagships, we propose to give ourselves as guiding principles the following four criteria:

1. Transforming effect: the flagship should have a clear transforming effect related to SDG12, on our activities and with respect to its impact.
2. The concepts of “production” and “consumption” should be very clearly identifiable in the definition of the flagship. We actually strongly believe that at least one of the flagships should be very clearly centered on consumption, or, more generally, on societal and multiscale transition towards sustainability and responsibility.
3. We should also keep clearly in mind the notion of “responsible” choices, leading to a global view of the problems to be addressed. Do we clearly plan to produce knowledge which leads to responsible uses? Do we take time to ask ourselves this question?
4. Global / systemic thinking should be integrated in all our activities. One idea could be for each planned research action to refer itself to another level, more macroscopic or more microscopic, or-maybe related to a completely different discipline.

However, we will also need to favor the development of a broad collaboration space between our universities. Therefore, while still keeping the requirement that any action should be strongly supported by at least 3 partners, we propose to use 20% of the overall available budget to fund any cooperation between us outside the flagships. This means that 80% of the funding should be focused on activities around flagships, while 20% will be available to further densify our networking in research.

Who should attend the WP4 sessions, and which sessions?

As the global aim of these sessions is to build up a shared, comprehensive view of how to activate the knowledge square within EURECA-PRO, it is important not to compartmentalize our approach into non-communicating silos. That is even more important as we will need to explore the connections between the edges of the knowledge square. Therefore, as many colleagues, PhD students and Master students as possible, who are committed to the success of the “Research, Innovation, Third mission” facet of EURECA-PRO, are warmly invited to join all the sessions (except the one on overall management of the WP, which is more about coordination and governance), so as to contribute to this shared, comprehensive view.

However, we have perfect understanding for the fact that some may want to attend parallel sessions on other topics at some times, or will feel much more involved in only one or two of the sessions. Attendance of all the sessions is therefore by no way mandatory; we still hope that we will have a good common subset of attendees.

Joint meeting WP3/WP4 – Tuesday Feb 6, 2024 – 13:30-15:00

In this meeting, an overall view will be given of the two work-packages and the connections they have with each other. For WP4, the global view expressed in the present document will be presented.

Expected outcomes: this meeting is important for all those who plan to take part in subsequent sessions on WP4. No specific conclusions expected from this meeting, but a shared view of what we want to build and how this interrelates with the other WPs. So questions and comments will be welcome during the meeting.

WP4 – breaking the ice – Tuesday Feb 6, 2024 – 15:30-16:30

Once we have received a general overview of WP4 and its position within EURECA-PRO, it is time to get to know each other, and share freely on our views for WP4 and for EURECA-PRO. We will have both “old-timers” from phase 1 of EURECA-PRO, some colleagues who have contributed significantly to the definition of WP4 in the writing process for preparing phase 2, and newcomers. We want to avoid that the latter just sit and listen to dialogue between people who have already extensively discusses all the issues. We will therefore organize a “fishbowl conversation”, which is a way to keep a focused conversation when you have a large group of people.

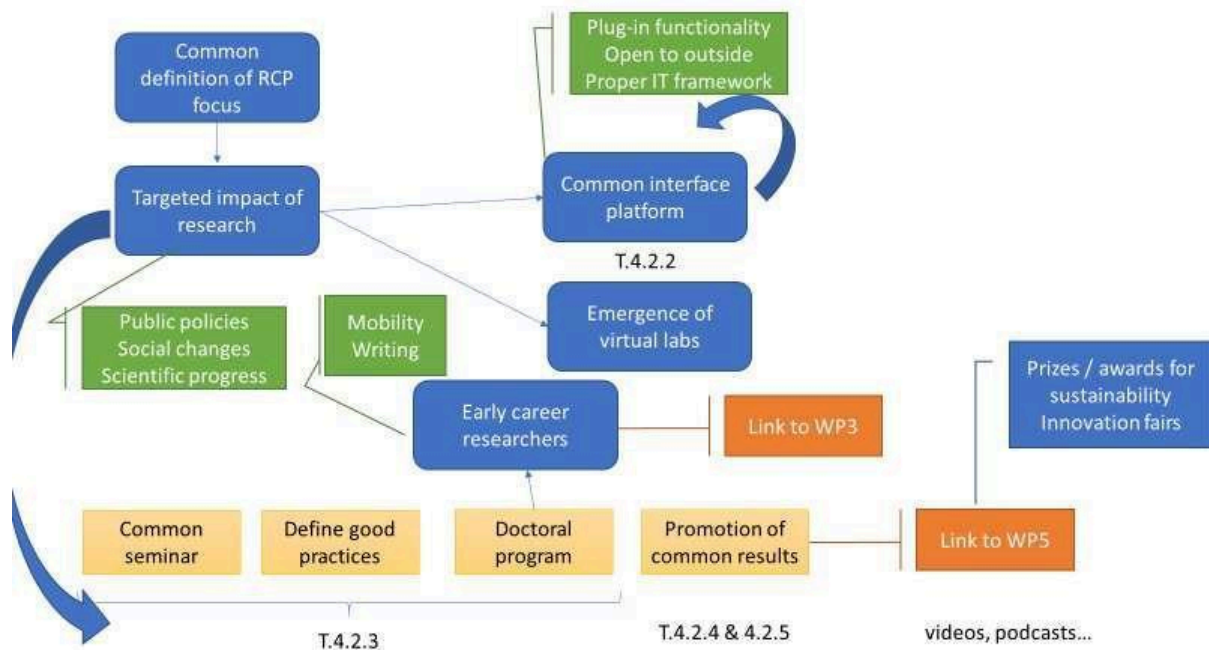
Here is a summary of the rules (see the site <https://www.funretrospectives.com/fishbowl-conversation/> for more details):

- At any time, only a few people have a conversation (the fish in the fishbowl). The remaining people are listeners (the ones watching the fishbowl). The caveat is that the listeners can join the discussion at any moment.
- Five chairs are placed at the centre of the room. 1 is empty, 1 is occupied by the moderator, 3 are occupied by the 3 persons that at each time discuss a given topic. The listeners do not take part in the debate. The moderator does not take part in the debate but relauches it or proposes a new topic if the conversation is dying out.
- At any moment, a listener can decide to join the conversation by coming to sit on the empty chair. The debater who has been sitting there the longest time then has to go back and sit with the listeners.
- Nobody can be a debater more than once (i.e. once you went back to the group of listeners, you cannot get back to the debate chairs)

The purpose of the meeting is to break the ice, to give all the participants the opportunity to react to the presentation made in the previous meeting or to come up with an idea, a comment, a question, a concern...

Expected outcomes: no specific conclusions expected from this meeting, but the opportunity for the members of the group to get to know each other and voice their opinion on various issues. This should hopefully create a positive working atmosphere, in preparation of the next day’s brainstorming sessions.

WP4 – The research pillar – Wednesday Feb 7, 2024 – 09:00-10:30



Once the overall target defined, as described in the “General considerations section”, we will need to start building the common interface platform – a virtual database giving access to the partners’ respective dynamic databases on SDG12 projects where possible, scientific competencies & research outputs. This interface must allow all staff to connect to all the platforms and databases via their own identifiers and codes, used in their organization. To keep it alive, it should be built using **plug-in functionalities**. This common platform should be able to open to the outside world at one moment of time (certainly not from the beginning, as we first need to consolidate our internal mapping of competences) and organized to attract external partners (e.g. building of EU consortia, or partnering with the private sector). This requires a proper IT framework and an investment in IT competences to get a proper plug-in system (e.g. French “Plug-in Lab” system). This is T.4.2.2, led by UL+TUC. A first prototype should be up and running within 18 months; the platform would then be regularly improved, with new and more complete releases (one should expect to test its opening to external partners within 30 months).

To start work, and before looking for technical solutions, we need to think about what we want, and ask ourselves some preliminary questions, such as

1. Objectives: why do we want to create a platform?

- First ideas: Identify the competences and expertise of alliance members on OOD12, Making the competences and expertise of alliance members visible on OOD12, build up on these competences and expertise throughout the life of the

alliance, Enabling the development of professional integration projects within the alliance.

2. What are the targets, who are the end users?

- First ideas: the alliance's support functions (Project Managers, coordinators, TTOs, project managers, Flagships and WP leaders, etc.), researchers, teachers, administrative staff from the partner universities, alliance doctoral students and potential doctoral students (candidates considering a doctoral project), audiences outside the alliance (doctoral students, students, political decision-makers, company managers, company employees, associations, the citizens, young people, ...)

3. What are the data ?


- First ideas: Entry by EURECA-PRO and/or SDG12 themes, Research and teaching competences, research and teaching infrastructure, links with the other SDGs, links with Flagships, scientific productions (note: in the broadest sense, in line with COARA), applications and to Calls, successes in Calls, contact points, level(s) of analysis (micro - meso - macro), disciplines involved, laboratories involved ...


4. How are updates carried out?

- First ideas: a distinction is made between adding new themes and updating existing ones; the theme leaders act as moderators for their theme (possibly delegated to a support function); for updating existing themes: the theme manager has access to make changes twice a year maybe; for the addition of a new theme, proposal to the EB + Alliance Governance.

5. Update authorisations

- To be discussed depending on the target audience

 If the whole momentum works well, we should see the emergence on the long run (48 months) of virtual labs (without wall) on designated topics between partners; this includes the preliminary definition of a common framework on what a virtual lab is.... We do believe that these virtual labs will most probably be based on the flagships.

 The research cooperation within EURECA-PRO will be focused on supporting the development and submission of research proposals focused on RCP, starting from the outset of the flagships created. This is T.4.2.3, led by UL+TUC. We recommend following a bottom-up process, by creating a space to help the emergence of ideas. A proposition could be to have three levels:

1. A regular online seminar, developing and enriching the idea of PhD seminar from phase 1, and mostly contributing to the flagships (something like an 80%/20% rule i.e.

4 of 5 seminars would be rooted in one of the flagships). Each seminar= 1 or 2 speakers + good time for discussion led by namely designated discussion leader.

2. The seminars could culminate in one or two lunch-to-lunch workshops where the community contributing to one flagship gathers to work intensively and develop strong connections.
3. An annual EURECA-PRO seminar over 2 or 3 days, distinct of the international conference which has other purposes – see below – would gather the community. This could be connected or not to a “review week”.

Good practices should be defined in order to prevent the proliferation of ideas from a single partner (e.g. at least 3 partners from the alliance, for a EURECA-PRO action). Doctorates are also a good tool to start a collaboration and implement a common research agenda in associating with a doctorate training program. This will ease the transition towards a Marie Skłodowska-Curie project. We propose that each flagship sets itself the aim of submitting a Marie Skłodowska-Curie proposal within 36 months.



In connection with WP3, actions should be specifically undertaken for PhD students + early career researchers. Mobility between partners, especially PhD students and young researchers, will be encouraged, as a first experience for international mobility. One idea submitted for discussion: would it be feasible to set up a joint mobility fund from our WP4 funds, which would be managed globally? This would mean that we have regular calls for mobility within the alliance, and we decide jointly on which mobilities to fund, instead of having each university managing this for its own students and staff, or on a purely bilateral basis with one other university...

Students and early career researchers should also be offered training on how to write a research proposal. NB: These two ideas will have to be discussed with WP3, as doctoral activities are a shared responsibility of the two work packages.



The promotion of common research results is essential to launch the momentum: it should be done by special videos, podcasts about hot topics, where the EURECA-PRO/European added-value is clearly present (e.g. based on local contexts to build joint research topics). A research section should be created in the regular EURECA-PRO newsletter (see WP5) advertising open faculty positions, visiting fellow or PhD/post-doc positions, projects in preparation and extending offers to join research activities, and disseminate relevant scientific results or EURECA-PRO news related to RCP. This is T.4.2.4 led by HSMW+UP, to be implemented very soon (within 12 months) and regularly improved. This section will promote international cooperation and mobility in research, inside and outside the Alliance. This point will have to be discussed and coordinated with WP5.

On the long run (48 months) T.4.2.5, led by TUC+ULE, will re-shape the existing EURECA-PRO Conference into a biennial international forum on RCP research and innovation for the

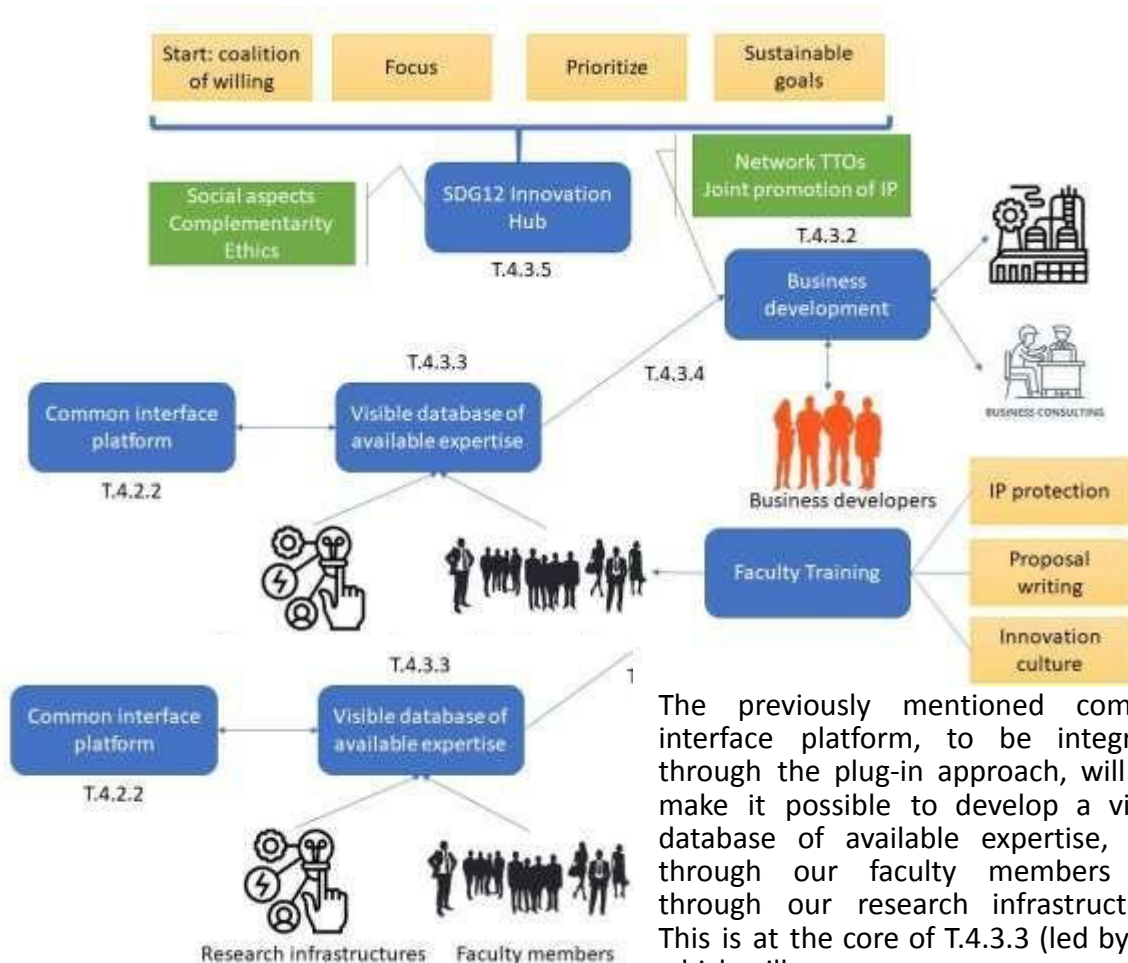
international scientific community. This will be different of the seminar mentioned for T.4.2.3, which is internal to the alliance.

Questions to be discussed during the meeting (NB: other questions can also be raised)

- The Common Interface Platform: What skills and competences should be mapped? At which level (individual researcher? Research group? Departments and institutes?) How do we proceed – through the individual university channel? Through the flagships? How do we guarantee that the platform remains up to date over the long run? What should the first steps be – Work on the IT solution? Start the mapping? Work on a stabilized set of features to map?
- Research cooperation: Discuss the propositions made in this document (online seminar / lunch-to-lunch workshops / annual seminar). What should be the relationship between these seminars and the annual conference?
- Good practices: How much focus should we have on the flagships – is 80%/20% a good ratio? How many partners should be strongly involved for an action to be within the scope of EURECA-PRO? Discussion about the idea of aiming for a MSCA network within 36 months for each flagship.
- Actions to be launched for PhD students and early career researchers
- Communication in the EURECA-PRO newsletter and to the outside world: What should be our strategy?
- Long-term view on the biennial international conference

The session will be run as a brainstorming meeting, with conclusions drawn up on these different topics, and brought to the wrap-up meeting the next day. The questions related to doctoral studies will be brought to the discussion with WP3 the next day.

WP4 – The innovation pillar - Wednesday Feb 7, 2024 – 11:00-12:30



The previously mentioned common interface platform, to be integrated through the plug-in approach, will also make it possible to develop a visible database of available expertise, both through our faculty members and through our research infrastructures. This is at the core of T.4.3.3 (led by UL), which will:

1. identify current and future training needs from the perspective of transformation of the industrial world and of public decision-making processes,
2. encourage interventions of companies and other external stakeholders in EURECA-PRO training and in jointly designed research and innovation projects,
3. create case studies to feed into the challenge-based learning activities (WP3),
4. identify internships in companies and with public authorities, and diagnose opportunities for EURECA-PRO to meet the innovation needs of industrials/ professionals/ practitioners for consultancy or research,
5. initiate public-private partnerships, share best practices, and establish consortia to apply to European calls for projects.



In connection with WP3, we will also need to develop training for our faculty members on innovation issues: IP protection, proposal writing, development of an innovation culture



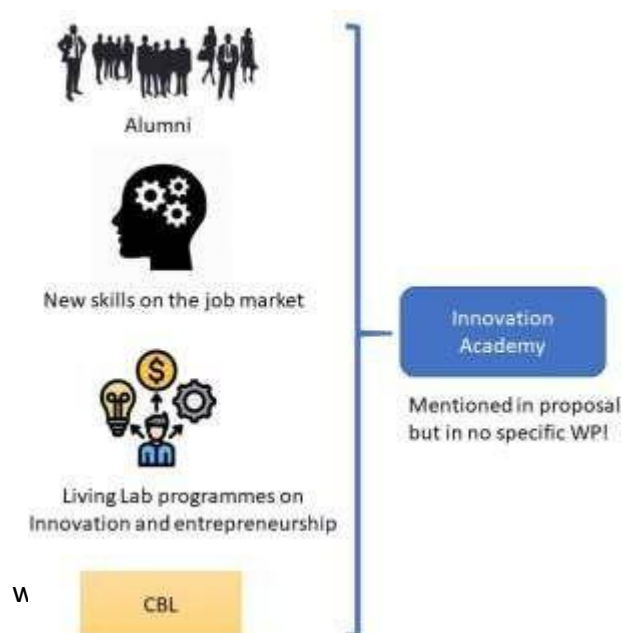
Building on the first network of industrial and business partners identified in phase 1 of EURECA-PRO, the goal of T.4.3.2 (led by UL) is to consolidate and enrich this network with partners from all the EURECA-PRO regions, to form a comprehensive network representing different aspects of RCP issues. Different types of companies will be sought, innovative start-ups, SMEs and similar groups, larger groups. Special attention will be given to innovation clusters and to regional, national and

process, we will have to network our business developers (for those who have business developers), with solid fact-sheets for contacts in the economic world. At mid-term, once the first projects will have been set up, contact will also be sought with Business Consulting Companies, developing a model of cooperation with them, based on progressively building up confidence. Ultimately, we will probably also need to network our TTOs, and strive towards joint promotion of joint IP across TTOs. However, joint IP will only be a question to discuss once the flagships have set up virtual labs which work as virtual labs and start to produce joint IP. This is probably still far away, maybe something for the continuation, after phase 2.



These different elements will converge towards the emergence of a SDG12 Innovation Hub (T.4.3.5, led by MUL), to foster the emergence of a pan-European community on RCP, with smooth and

ers, public authorities, actors of innovation, and educational institutions. The progressive approach will be to start with a “coalition of the willing”, focus from there, prioritize, and set sustainable goals.



T.4.3.4 – “Innovation Living Lab” will associate external shareholders and have a view on usages. It actually contributes to develop “The Joint Innovation Cluster”, to provide opportunities for internships, mentoring and advisory activities, ideation and sharing of knowledge (T4.3.3). This again connects with the Career Service Center to provide information on possible European employment opportunities, primarily (T2.2.2). NB: It will be important to focus this on SDG12 and not aim at a very general Career Service Center.

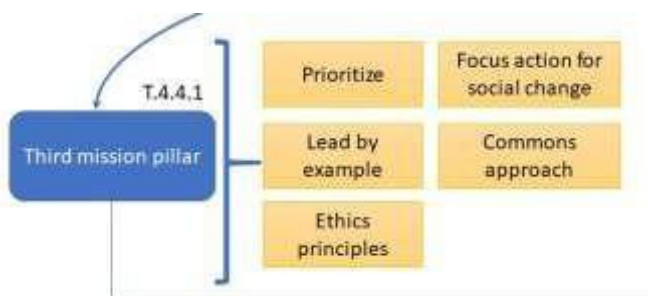
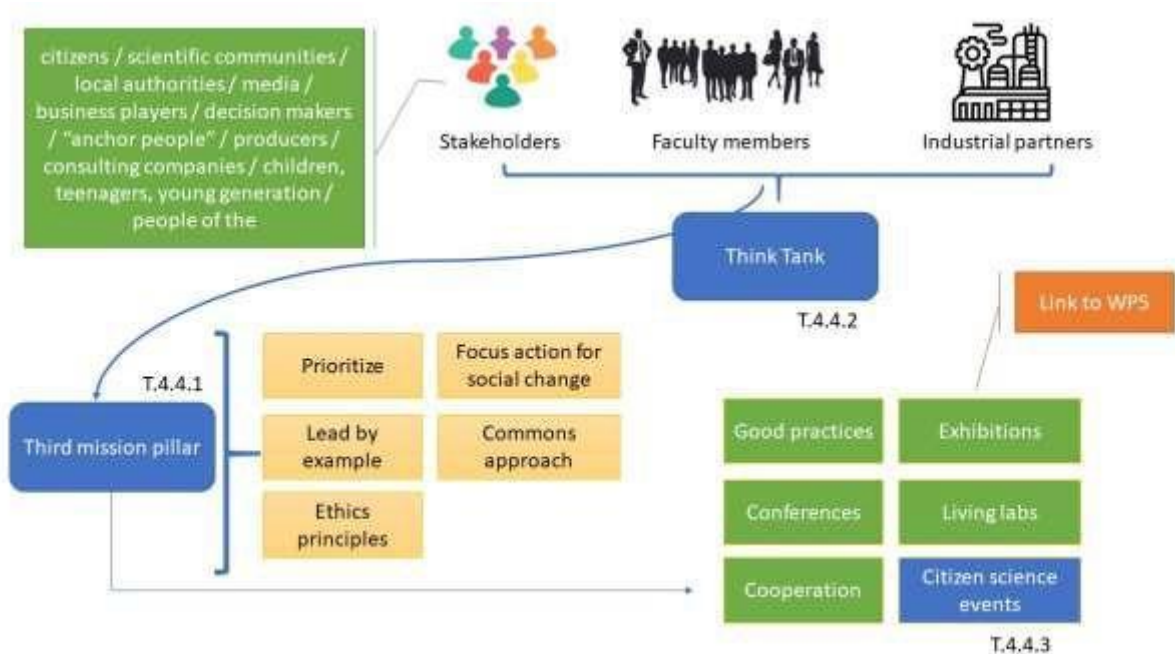
To be discussed with WP3: regular feedback from stakeholders for properly designing study programs and challenge-based learning and research-led teaching location and research & innovation.

Questions to be discussed during the meeting (NB: other questions can also be raised)

- Network of economic SDG12 players and SDG12 Innovation Hub: How to build on the existing network and extend it appropriately – big and small companies, clusters, startups, etc. How to extend the connections to Business Consulting companies, and how to work with them? How and when to network our TTOs? For what purpose? How to ensure consistency with the development of the SDG12 Innovation Hub?
- How to take advantage of this networking to provide a true “Joint Innovation Cluster” with opportunities for our students, our researchers, and our partners? How can we use this to the benefit of our study programs, through challenge-based learning actions, etc.?
- How to proceed, from the common interface platform built in the context of the research pillar, to include all necessary information for a true EURECA-PRO database of expertise and possible services to external stakeholders?
- What do we put in the concept of Living Labs, how do we want to develop that concept within EURECA-PRO?
- For what kind of innovation skills should we work with WP3 to provide training to our students, PhD students, faculty and staff?

The session will be run as a brainstorming meeting, with conclusions drawn up on these different topics, and brought to the wrap-up meeting the next day. Some issues will be brought to the discussion with WP3 the next day.

WP4 – The third mission pillar - Wednesday Feb 7, 2024 – 13:30-15:00



The Project Factory contributes to the content creation of lecture materials for transversal skills (NB: we are not completely convinced that this is clear enough in the proposal, so we will need to discuss this further), intercultural awareness and the societal aspects of RCP, while helping organize the content according to

societal-based challenges and approaches. The targeted actions are exchange and facilitation of good practices, contribution to conferences organized by EURECA-PRO partners, cooperation with existing organizations, exhibitions, cooperation with authorities & politicians as ambassadors/allies, living labs, lab factories.

A special mention is to be given to citizen science events (T.4.4.3):

- science SLAM, project week, pupils/citizens university (see RE-EURECA-PRO experience, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rjk9TixZs60&t=97s>)
- for young people, activities should be local/focused, hands-on actions (like Medialab Project)
- 3-generation academy: different groups brought together as a fixed institution where existing event can be put together
- participation in existing fairs (more realistic than creating our own)
- competition for RCP award (for external stakeholders)

- develop learning material, boarding games, buddy program between pupils & students/researchers.

All these discussions and events should also help to produce a collective reflection on good practices in mediation and scientific communication, concerning RCP but more generally on the question of the link between science and society in terms of societal challenges.

Ultimately, at the end of Year 3, we propose to gather all these threads into a major event. UL has previously organized several international [Science&You](#) events, and might considering contributing to a new one focused on SDG12 and with many contributions from EURECA-PRO partners.



T.4.4.2, the Think Tank, reflects the prospective, systemic and transformative topics for research, education and innovation, linked to SDG 12.

The EURECA-PRO Think Tank will be composed of academic staff from EURECA-PRO members and, if relevant, members of other European universities, of experts from industry and from political bodies. The role of the Think Tank will be to irrigate appropriate stakeholders at the national and European levels with prospective papers (position papers, white papers, prospective papers) about key issues related to RCP.

NB: The Think Tank must also be linked to WP5, to disseminate its own deliverables, such as prospective papers.

Questions to be discussed during the meeting (NB: other questions can also be raised)

- Do we have the right list of citizen science events, and how do we organize them in the most appropriate and efficient way? What should be the reasonable timeline for these events?
- How do we lead to the convergence of all these actions into a major conference on Third Mission for RCP at the end of the project? Or is this not a good idea?
- How do we build on the partnerships from innovation pillar, and other contacts, to develop the Think Tank? What should be its working? How to influence private and public decision makers?

The session will be run as a brainstorming meeting, with conclusions drawn up on these different topics, and brought to the wrap-up meeting the next day. Some issues will be brought to the discussion with WP5 the next day.

WP4 – Overall management – Wednesday Feb 7, 2024 – 15:30-17:00

In the proposal, there are 5 tasks which are “governance” tasks, one for each pillar and an overall supervision task for the Project Factory:

- T4.1.1 E-P Project Factory
- T4.2.1 The Research Pillar
- T4.3.1 The Innovation Pillar
- T4.4.1 The Third Mission Pillar
- T4.5.1 The Teaching Innovation Pillar - creation & leveraging

After considering various ways of managing the whole WP, our conclusion is that if we let each of these tasks “run its own business”, we are at great risk of building independent silos and of losing all the benefit of thinking the knowledge square in a global, systemic way.

We therefore propose to merge these 5 tasks into a global “management and supervision” task, which we could name “T4.1.1 E-P Project Factory” (essentially having the latter encompass the supervisory tasks for each pillar), as the essence of the knowledge square is captured by what we have chosen to call the Project Factory.

In that case, we would insist on the fact that this task should be run by a coordination committee including representatives from all universities, including those which were not listed as task leaders in the proposal. The mission of this coordination committee would be to guarantee at each moment that we build a consistent, integrated Project Factory, considering all the aspects of the knowledge square. It will also report to the Executive Committee for overall coordination of the project.

Questions to be discussed during the meeting (NB: other questions can also be raised)

- Do we agree to set up such a coordination committee? How should it work? Which frequency of meetings? How to avoid having yet another “structure”, and keep necessary flexibility and autonomy, while guaranteeing overall consistency of the WP.
- What kind of reporting of the various tasks to this coordination committee?
- What kind of communication with the executive committee and with the other work packages, to ensure that WP4 does never become a standalone “project”?
- Is this what some people call a “council”? or a “task force”? Beyond vocabulary, what do we put in this concept?

The session will be run as a brainstorming meeting, with conclusions drawn up on these different topics, and brought to the wrap-up meeting the next day.

NB: for efficiency, we should probably only have task leaders and one or two responsible persons from each university, basically those who might become the coordination committee.

Joint WP3-WP4 session – Thursday Feb 8, 2024 – 09:00-10:30

The exact agenda for this meeting will be fed by the discussions in the WP4 sessions and the WP3 sessions held on Wednesday. Foreseen is that we will have debates at least on

- Doctoral studies and developing a true “graduate school” approach for EURECA-PRO
- How to take advantage of the partnerships developed in WP4 for our educational programs, and vice-versa?
- How to keep consistency between our flagships and the development of our educational programs?
- Training for skills (especially innovation)

Joint WP4-WP5 session – Thursday Feb 8, 2024 – 11:00-12:30

The exact agenda for this meeting will be fed by the discussions in the WP4 sessions and the WP5 sessions held on Wednesday.

- Expected outcome(s): The objectives are to discover what The Conversation Europe is. We'll have to define if The Conversation Europe is relevant for our alliance and to select the conditions we can integrate it. More generally, and in the second part of the slot, we have to discuss how the WP5 (communication) can support the “third mission” of the WP4.
- Foreseen is that we will have debates at least on internal and external communication on our research momentum (newsletter, etc.), dissemination of our research results, communication on expertise by the EURECA-PRO consortium (see Innovation Cluster), the development of the international conference, Third mission, and especially the Think Tank, a possible Science&You conference at the end of the project, one sequence will be devoted to “The Conversation Europe”, with a presentation by a representative from that journal.
- More precisely, the main discussion points will be:
 - 1) Third Mission & The Conversation Europe (45') (Presentation by Fabrice Rousselot + questions (30'), and debriefing with the WP4 et WP5 members (15').
 - 2) How WP5 can support the WP4 3rd Mission? (45')
 - a) define the communication strategy (goals, targets) and the communication plan (25')
 - b) How shall we organize it to apply this strategy (10')
 - c) Towards an event like Science&You in 2026? (5')

WP4 wrap-up – Thursday Feb 8, 2024 – 13:30-15:00

In this final session, we will try to gather all the conclusions of the different sessions and discuss the global outline for WP4, and the action plan for the coming weeks and months.