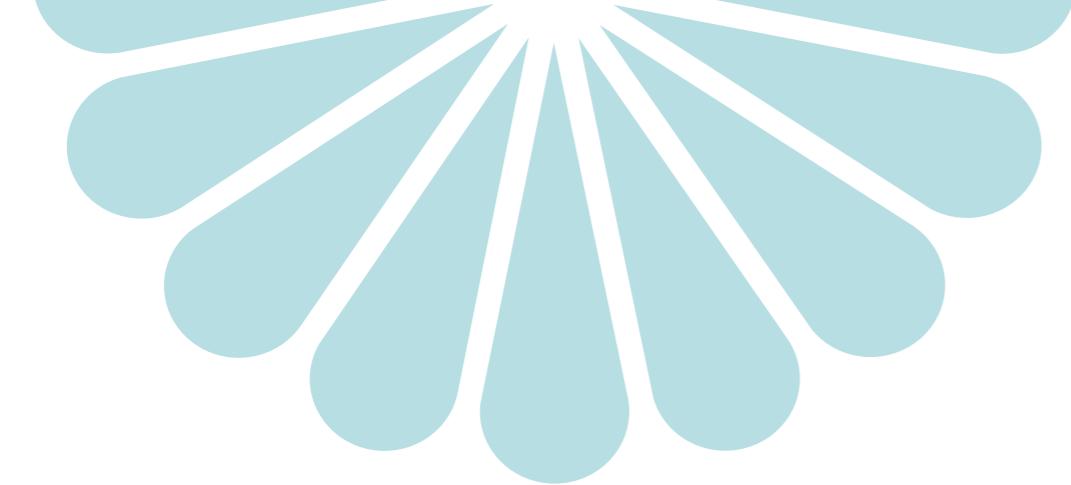




THRIVE TOGETHER!

Strategy
2026-2030



Thrive Together!

Founded in 2015, the Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN) was established to bring together like-minded young research universities across Europe. With the main objective of amplifying the collective voice of these institutions in European policy-making, it has strengthened its collective impact over the last decade.

YERUN universities were established from the 1960s onwards, in response to concrete societal needs in their respective regions in Europe, such as access to higher education, as well as regional development, modernisation and growth.

YERUN universities, with their entrepreneurial and future-oriented mindset, lead in driving novel strategies for higher education teaching, talent development and engagement with the private and public sectors. New knowledge and insight, based on high-quality research, are of value to society only if shared. YERUN universities therefore foster academic openness and welcome national, regional and international collaboration, including cross-sectoral collaboration.

Young research universities, with their academic strength, their entrepreneurial and future-oriented mindset and their societal commitment are imperative for Europe to thrive in the future. This is reflected in the YERUN 2026-2030 Strategy.

VISION & MISSION

By 2030, YERUN will stand as a leading force championing the role of young research universities, ensuring they are visible, influential and central to Europe's long-term education, research and innovation agenda.

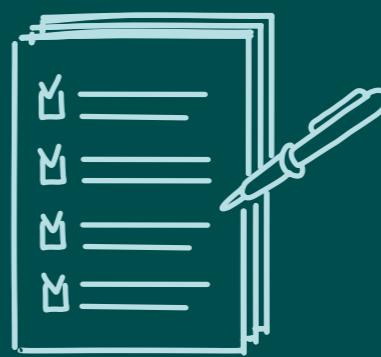
YERUN strives to shape a European research and education landscape where young research universities thrive through active collaboration, lead innovative initiatives, foster dialogue and promote innovation, competitiveness and sustainable growth.

To fulfil our mission, YERUN works through two main activities, namely collaboration and policy advocacy.



Collaboration

Promoting collaborations and joint transformative activities among YERUN members, deepening connections and mutual learning, and supporting them in achieving greater impact.



Policy Advocacy

Advising on EU policies that demonstrate and strengthen the role and the impact of young research universities, informing policies and initiatives with key achievements and experiences from YERUN members.

VALUES

In pursuing our mission, YERUN will continue to embrace unity, courage, integrity, inclusiveness and engagement as core values in our collaborations, activities and decision-making.



FOCUS AREAS 2026 - 2030



FOCUS AREA 1

Promoting the interests of young research universities in the European Education, Research and Innovation landscape

Young research universities can only achieve their full potential if the policy landscape supports their ambitions. YERUN will continue strengthening the voice of young research universities, bringing the needs and evidence from our members into key EU policies and initiatives. YERUN will further support/empower our members to engage directly in policy work, reinforcing the connection between European and national policy-making.



PRIORITIES

- » Participate in the design and development of the next **Multiannual Financial Framework**, including its key programmes of the future Erasmus+, Horizon Europe and the new European Competitiveness Fund, maximising opportunities for young research universities.
- » Contribute to the implementation of the **European Research Area** (ERA), the development of the ERA Act and the relevant policy initiatives for our members in the areas of careers, research assessment, open science, knowledge valorisation, universities and ecosystems, and research security.
- » Advance the **digital transformation** of higher education and research through engagement in EU policy-making, fostering the responsible and human-centred use of Artificial Intelligence and promoting interdisciplinary and inclusive approaches.
- » Engage in policies and initiatives on the **future of education and skills**, the role of universities in **providing, attracting and retaining talent**, advancing models of partnerships and alliances for collaboration in these areas.

FOCUS AREA 2

Promoting strong and connected young research universities

Collaboration is central to YERUN's identity as we aim to "thrive together". YERUN will facilitate the sharing and exchange of best practices among members on topics and themes of importance to member universities, both individually and collectively.



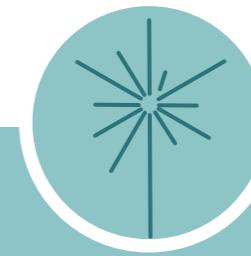
PRIORITIES

- » Share best practices and **enhance human resources strategies** across members on career development, talent recruitment, retention, leadership, mentoring and career progression.
- » Facilitate dialogue on how **digital tools and artificial intelligence** can enhance teaching, research, lifelong learning and institutional management.
- » Support new partnership models that **promote entrepreneurial skills**, start-up creation and cross-sectoral collaboration, maximising the impact of research and developing strong and connected ecosystems.
- » **Analyse strengths**, e.g., through the Connect by YERUN platform, and deepen strategic research collaboration across YERUN universities.
- » Share and promote strategies and practices on **funding diversification, institutional development and sustainability**.

FOCUS AREA 3

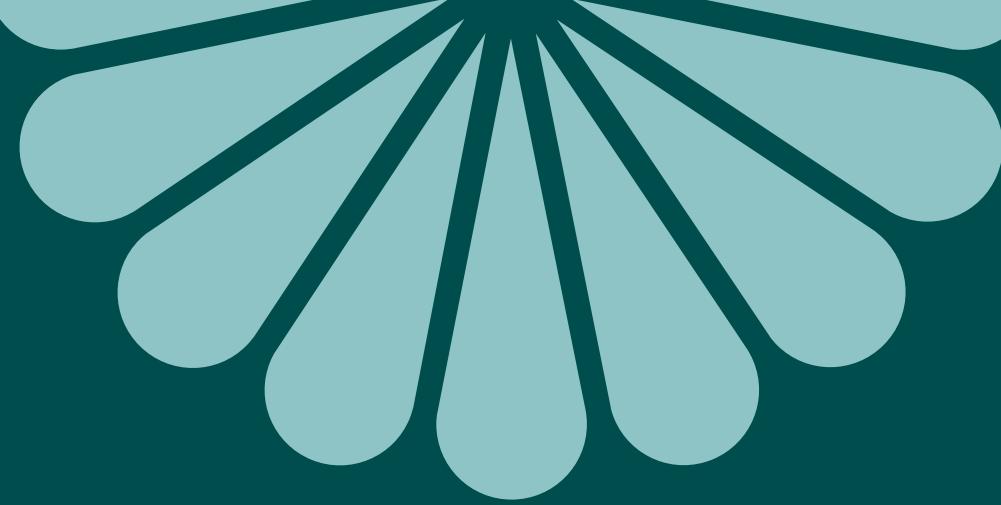
Strengthening societal impact and academic values

Embedding a true culture of societal engagement throughout the whole university community will contribute to building a better society overall. As universities, we are connectors within the ecosystems we live in: we strive to engage other parts of society as equal partners, with an inclination towards collaboration rather than competition. Universities adapt to ever-evolving challenges by developing agile structures, promoting institutional transformation and encouraging a culture of flexible leadership. YERUN institutions believe in the importance of facilitating a dialogue with other young research universities and with non-academic partners.



PRIORITIES

- » Support young universities' initiatives that **uphold and foster academic values and freedom**.
- » **Empower students** and their associations to engage in active dialogue and create spaces of exchange within their communities to act as responsible citizens and future leaders.
- » Promote **open and transparent science communication** as a foundation of trust between universities and citizens, making research more accessible, engaging, and closer to the public.
- » Promote mechanisms that bring **evidence-based research** closer to political decision-making.



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