

## **EUA Focus Group: The role of universities in innovation ecosystems**

Hosted by Aalborg University

Aalborg, Denmark

1 February 2019

### **1. Context**

The European University Association (EUA) is organising a Focus Group for university leaders across Europe to discuss the role of universities in innovation ecosystems. The event will be hosted by [Aalborg University](#) in Denmark.

Universities work to develop innovative and sustainable solutions that benefit society at large, empower citizens, protect the environment and fuel the economy. In order to reach these goals we need a strong knowledge base through research and education, and we need highly skilled people with different talents willing to work together in a creative way. Co-creation is becoming more important due to open innovation and the intense collaboration between various actors, and universities can play a unique role in this regard. They contribute to regional capacity building and competitiveness by delivering the evidence base stimulating innovation in companies and public organisations and by producing adaptable high-skilled graduates, facilitating entrepreneurship, and the circulation of knowledge. Often, they also provide the international talent pipelines needed to nourish and sustain a local or regional innovation ecosystem.

EUA has collected evidence on the role of universities in innovation ecosystems through a comprehensive study based on site visits and in-depth interviews of key persons at nine EUA member universities in different regions of Europe. The purpose of this project is to showcase the various ways in which universities contribute to innovation processes, identify challenges and opportunities and provide a basis for a European-wide exchange on the topic.

At the focus group, EUA members will get an exclusive preview of the study and discuss the preliminary results. It will also be an opportunity to meet and engage with university leadership from all over Europe.

### **2. Event description**

EUA invites university leaders from across Europe with experience in developing and implementing institution-level strategies to foster innovation to exchange and share their views on this important topic. The event is part of an EUA project and serves to validate the results of a comprehensive study on the role of universities in innovation ecosystems. Participants will be asked to reflect and comment on preliminary results based on their own experience which provides an opportunity for sharing of good practices and peer learning among institutional leaders in an exclusive forum. The outcomes of the discussion will feed into the final project publication to be presented at a launch event in Brussels in spring 2019 as well as the [EUA Annual Conference in Paris in April 2019](#).

The focus group, conducted in English, will be a one-day event built around open discussions between all participants. Key questions will be sent in advance and participants should be prepared to contribute actively to the discussions.

The number of participants is limited to a maximum of 20, and applicants will be selected according to the criteria specified under point 2 below (selection criteria). The event is restricted to staff from EUA member institutions.

There is no registration fee, and participants are expected to cover their own travel and accommodation costs. Meals and refreshments on the day of the event will be provided free of charge to participants. Applicants should not make any travel arrangements before they have officially been selected for participation. Participants selected to take part in the event will receive additional practical information in due course.

### **3. Selection criteria**

Applicants will be selected based on their experience in public engagement and their motivation to attend. Special consideration will be given to ensuring a geographical balance as well as a diversity of experiences and institutional profiles. Applicants should have a leading function at their institution (rector, vice-rector or similar).

### **4. Submitting your expression of interest**

For more information please contact [events@eua.eu](mailto:events@eua.eu). To submit your expression of interest, please click on the link below, fill in the application form and do not forget to click on the red button at the end: [https://eua.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9ubVMC6BAzTcGbP](https://eua.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9ubVMC6BAzTcGbP)

The **deadline for applications is 26 October 2018**.

We strongly encourage you to submit your application to participate as soon as possible. Applicants will be informed about the selection results in the course of November.