

KEYNOTE

The YUFE Community Engagement Declaration reaffirms YUFE's mission to transform European higher education by establishing the leading model of a student-centred, open, and inclusive European University. It further emphasizes the Alliance's commitment to making a meaningful societal impact.

This Declaration positions YUFE as a dedicated Alliance, contributing to the resolution of pressing societal challenges. In alignment with the YUFE quintuple helix model, collaboration with diverse actors is paramount, and community engagement stands as a transversal principle that is deeply integrated into all activities of the Alliance.

VALUES

- ▶ **CO-CREATION THROUGH DIALOGUE**
- ▶ **GIVING & GAINING**
- ▶ **EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY**
- ▶ **OPENNESS**
- ▶ **SUSTAINABILITY**
- ▶ **(G)LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

OBJECTIVES: WHAT DO WE WANT?

To encourage, support and reward **community-engaged teaching, learning and research**

To foster YUFE Universities as **civic-minded learning communities**, promoting social cohesion, equality, diversity, equity and inclusion

To promote intercultural understanding, critical thinking, political and religious tolerance, gender equality, democratic and civic **values**, and respect for the environment

To **empower** students and staff to **engage** in community initiatives as active citizens

To keep opening **dialogue channels** for meaningful engagement with local communities in **co-created** activities.

To provide easy access to tailored **lifelong learning** for citizens and professionals

To improve bidirectional **knowledge sharing** with the public using a **flipped transfer approach**

To maintain conversations with local governments, public institutions and organisations in YUFE cities and regions to better understand **community needs**

To collaborate with entrepreneurs to strengthen local and regional **innovation ecosystems**

To forge **transnational networks** with YUFE local actors for joint projects

To **exchange experiences** and collaborate across borders

RECOMMENDATIONS: HOW WE WANT TO DO IT

Advocating for YUFE's civic and democratic mission

Integrating community and environmental dimensions into
YUFE Alliance policies, governance, and actions

Fostering student and staff **competencies** to engage with (g)local communities

Motivating staff and students to cooperate with the community by taking
such activities into account in **evaluation and reward mechanisms**

Rewarding community-engaged research and innovation, including successful
knowledge valorisation partnerships, and increasing their visibility

Acknowledging academic and non-academic actors'
contributions to (g)local initiatives

Designing community engagement initiatives considering **local contexts**

Developing a pathway to **recognise** citizens' involvement in YUFE initiatives

Including community engagement modules in **teaching and learning paths**

Aligning YUFE community engagement activities
with the **needs** of YUFE local actors

Establishing clear YUFE **cooperation procedures** for joint
projects with internal and external collaborators

Exploring **funding mechanisms** for community engagement initiatives

Highlighting the value of YUFE's Community Engagement
Declaration within the **YUFE Communication Strategy**

Striving to become a **European community engagement benchmark**

The societal contribution of higher education started re-emerging in the last decade as a European policy priority with the demand for higher education to address societal challenges, as expressed in relevant strategic and policy documents:

European societies are characterised by the great diversity of needs and aspirations of learners within society. Social responsibility and responsiveness in education means recognising and responding to these needs by empowering learners, voice their concerns and encourage them to participate actively in educational decision-making processes. In this way, education becomes more responsive to the dynamic social realities and changing demands of society.
(‘Learners First’. Education for Today’s and Tomorrow’s Democratic Societies. Council of Europe Education Strategy 2024-2030, 2023)

Community engagement should be considered as a process whereby higher education institutions engage with external community stakeholders to undertake joint activities that can be mutually beneficial. (...) This will enable genuine university-community partnerships, which can effectively address social and democratic challenges.

(EHEA Conference Rome Ministerial Communiqué, Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA, 2020)

Higher education must play its part in facing up to Europe’s social and democratic challenges. This means ensuring that higher education is inclusive, open to talent from all backgrounds, and that higher education institutions are not ivory towers, but civic-minded learning communities connected to their communities.

(Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions On A Renewed Eu Agenda For Higher Education, 2017)

QUINTUPLE HELIX MODEL

(YUFE 2030)

Endorsing a quintuple helix model in communications aligns well with YUFE's achievements and goals. This model emphasises collaboration among academia, industry, government, and civil society, while fully acknowledging the importance and boundaries of the environment. It is a powerful framework for fostering innovation, sustainability, and societal progress. By highlighting this approach in communications, YUFE can better showcase its commitment to holistic development and inclusive partnerships that benefit diverse communities in YUFE cities/regions.

