

D 1.3

Terms of Reference for the External Advisory Board





# **DELIVERABLE INFORMATION**

Project No.	101177165
Project Name	FORum of European Universities for All
Project acronym	FOR-EU4AII

Deliverable No.	1.3
Deliverable Name	Terms of Reference for the External Advisory Board
Work Package	WP1 – Management & Coordination
Work Package Leader	Olga Wessels (ECIU)
Work Package Co- Leader	Ludovic Thilly (EC2U)
Contractual Date	June 30 <sup>th</sup> (M8)
Deliverable Date	June 26 <sup>th</sup> (M8)





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Dissemination Level	Public

# **DOCUMENT HISTORY**

Date	Revision No.	Prepared by	Description
31/03/2025	V1.0	Giulia Falchi	Index and first
		(FOR-EU4All Project &	version of the
		Policy officer)	content
07/04/2025	V1.1	Olga Wessels	First overall
		(Coordinator of FOR-	review
		EU4AII, ECIU)	
14/04/2025	V1.2	Giulia Falchi	Modifications
			suggested are
			integrated
22/04/2025	V1.3	WP1 members	Round of reviews
28/04/2025	V2.0	Giulia Falchi & Olga	Modifications are
		Wessels	integrated and
			document
			presented to the
			Forum Board (FB)





29/04/2025	V2.0	Giulia Falchi & Olga	Document
		Wessels	presented at the
			External Advisory
			Board (EAB)
	V2.0	WP1, Project	Round of reviews
		Management Team	
		(PMT), FB, EAB	
19/05/2025	V2.1	Olga Wessels	The updated
			version presented
			and discussed at
			the General
			Forum (GF)
	V2.2	GF, EAB	Round of reviews
02/06/2025	V3	PMT	Modifications
			suggested are
			integrated
16/06/2025	V3.1	GF	The updated
			version is
			presented and
			validated through
			an online vote





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- 6. Annex II Grant Agreement
- 7. Annex III Deliverable & report template





#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The deliverable 1.3 "Terms of Reference for the External Advisory Board" presents the FOREU4ALL Governance Framework, developed within the Erasmus+ project FOREU4All (GA 101177165 – ERASMUS-EDU-2024-EUR-UNIV) under Work Package 1: Management and Coordination. It provides a comprehensive overview of the project's objectives, governance structure, operational procedures and external engagement strategy. The Governance Framework has been prepared collaboratively by the Project Management Team (PMT) and the Forum Board (FB), in consultation with the External Advisory Board (EAB), and approved by the General Forum (GF), ensuring collective ownership and alignment with the objectives of the FOR-EU4All project and the wider FOREU4ALL Community of Practice (CoP).

The Governance Framework defines the project's purpose, scope, and implementation strategy. It clarifies the composition, roles, responsibilities, and proceedings of FOREU4ALL's five key governance bodies: the General Forum (GF) as the main decision-making body; the Forum Board (FB) as the operational and executive group supporting the GF; the Project Management Team (PMT), responsible for day-to-day project implementation and coordination; the Central Office, providing administrative and operational support; and the External Advisory Board (EAB), which acts as a interface with the wider European higher education sector.

The **External Advisory Board** (EAB) is composed of major European higher education stakeholder organisations, its first members are representatives from the EUA, EURASHE, ENQA, ESU, and ESN. It ensures links between FOREU4ALL and relevant sectoral developments, advising on the strategic direction of the Community of Practice and contributing to dissemination, policy dialogue and advocacy activities. Through its External Engagement Strategy, the EAB establishes structured, proactive mechanisms for interaction with external stakeholders and regularly participates in FOREU4ALL initiatives such as Policy Learning Labs, topical workshops and stakeholder dialogues, supporting the Community of Practice's continued relevance and connection to broader sector priorities.

The Governance Framework enhances the visibility of interconnections between FOREU4ALL governance bodies, offering a clear, unified point of reference for both internal and external stakeholders.





# Disclaimer on Terminology

Please note that in the Grant Agreement and Deliverables list, Deliverable **D1.1** is titled "Terms of Reference for the Project Meeting." In this document and within the FOREU4ALL governance framework, this body is referred to as the **Project Management Team (PMT)**. The term Project Management Team (PMT) has been consistently adopted to align with the terminology used throughout the project's governance structure and to reflect the full scope of its operational and coordination responsibilities as described in the Consortium Agreement (Annex I).





## 1. Objectives and scope of the FOREU4ALL Governance Framework

The FOREU4ALL Governance Framework outlines the purpose, structure and implementation of FOREU4ALL. It describes the:

- vision, objectives and scope (i.e., what we want to achieve),
- partners, roles and responsibilities (i.e., who will take part in it),
- governance, decision-making procedures, communication and information processes within FOREU4ALL and externally (i.e., how it will be undertaken).

The FOREU4ALL Governance Framework builds upon the founding documents of FOREU4ALL, i.e., the FOR-EU4All Consortium Agreement (Annex I) and the Grant Agreement (Annex II).

This Governance Framework is prepared by FOR-EU4All WP1 "Management and Coordination", in collaboration with the Project Management Team and the Forum Board. It is approved by the General Forum. It is a living document with potential for revision. Amendments require simple majority approval by the General Forum.

#### 2. About FOREU4ALL

## 2.1 Objectives

The FOREU4ALL Community of Practice, hereafter FOREU4ALL, brings together all the 65 funded European Universities alliances (status May 2025) to collaborate, share best practices, and engage in a dialogue with policymakers and stakeholders to strengthen the higher education sector at large. The Erasmus+ project (n.101177165 – FOR-EU4ALL – ERASMUS-EDU-2024-EUR-UNIV) provides the financial and structural backbone of the Community of Practice (CoP).

FOREU4ALL promotes a bottom-up approach to collaboration with the ambition of shaping the future of higher education and research by amplifying Alliances' impact and success more broadly. FOREU4ALL is a space for:

- 1. Fostering a collaborative and supportive environment where Alliance representatives can share experiences, challenges, and solutions. Alliance representatives' knowledge, skills, and effectiveness will be enhanced through peer learning, exchange of practices, and mutual support.
- 2. Facilitating the dissemination of initiatives, practices, results and innovative approaches developed in the framework of the European Universities alliances within FOREU4ALL and towards the wider higher education sector.





- 3. Strengthening cooperation both among Alliances and with the broader higher education sector, promoting synergies, complementarity and long-term impact.
- 4. Strengthening and structuring the dialogue with policymakers and advocacy organisations on issues of direct relevance to European Universities alliances at the European, national and regional level.

## 2.2 FOR-EU4All project vs FOREU4ALL

With the acronym **FOR-EU4AII** we refer to the "FORum of European Universities for AII" Erasmus+ project (Grant Agreement- GA 101177165). FOR-EU4AII supports the development of the FOREU4ALL Community of Practice (CoP). Within FOR-EU4AII, all the 65 European Universities alliances participate as full partners or associated partners. More details about the project commitments can be found in the Consortium Agreement (Annex I) and in the Grant Agreement (Annex II).

With **FOREU4ALL** we refer to the CoP as a space for cooperation, which is supported by the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project. In FOREU4ALL, all the 65 European Universities alliances participate on an equal footing.

### 2.3 Values and principles of cooperation

FOREU4ALL is designed along key principles building upon the experience in the informal FOR-EU networks ("Forum of European Universities" - FOR-EU 1/2/3/4).

- 1. **FOREU4ALL is inclusive**: all European Universities alliances can participate in the governance and all activities on an equal footing.
- FOREU4ALL is transparent about developments, activities and processes, sharing information in an open way to empower the European Universities alliances.
- 3. **FOREU4ALL** is effective and efficient, being mindful of avoiding a heavy structure on top of the European Universities alliances and being responsive to evolving needs.
- 4. **FOREU4ALL respects** the fundamental values of universities in Europe, such as academic freedom, institutional autonomy and diversity.
- 5. **FOREU4ALL** is consensus-oriented: decisions are made by consensus, and by simple majority if needed. Consensus decision-making also implies that the





distribution of positions in the governing bodies is distributed equally among Alliances.

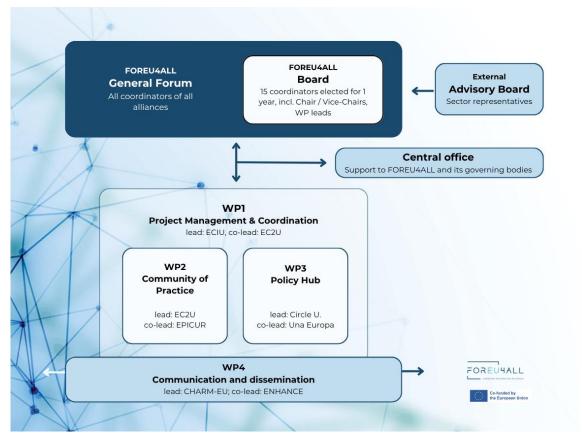
## 2.4 Governance bodies

This Governance Framework specifies the way of working of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project, by describing its structure and governance bodies as outlined in Section 6 "Governance structure" of the Consortium Agreement.

- 1. The **General Forum** (GF) is the key governing body that makes the strategic decisions concerning FOREU4ALL. It includes all representatives of the 65 European Universities alliances.
- 2. The **Forum Board** (FB) prepares the agenda for the GF and follows processes and developments in between meetings. It includes 15 members who are elected by the GF for a one-year term, plus the Project Management Team (PMT) as permanent members (see below).
- 3. The **Chair and two Vice-Chairs** of FOREU4ALL represent FOREU4ALL externally and provide strategic orientations, in cooperation with the FOR-EU4All Co-Coordinators. The Chair and Vice-Chairs are members of the FB and are elected by the GF for a one-year term.
- 4. The **Project Management Team** (PMT) consists of the FOR-EU4All Work Packages (co)leads and is responsible for the realisation and implementation of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project, which is the backbone of FOREU4ALL. The PMT members are also part of the FB.
- 5. The **FOR-EU4All Co-Coordinators** of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project represent FOR-EU4All externally and ensure coherence between FOR-EU4All activities and the FOREU4ALL CoP governance, in cooperation with the elected Chair and Vice-Chairs in their roles.
- 6. The FOREU4ALL Central Office provides administrative support to FOREU4ALL and its governing bodies, executes the activities and ensures smooth operations in compliance with the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project requirements and in line with the values and principles of FOREU4ALL. They are members of the PMT, FB and GF.
- 7. The External Advisory Board (EAB) ensures links to and engagement of the wider higher education sector in FOREU4ALL.







## 3. Governing bodies and appointees

#### 3.1. General Forum

The GF is the strategic body of FOREU4ALL. Equal partnership is the foundation of the GF. All 65 European Universities alliances are represented in an equal way; all voices are heard and respected. In the GF, everyone shall participate in a cooperative manner.

#### 3.1.1. Composition

- Each of the European Universities alliances have a First Contact Point, ideally its coordinator/Secretary-General, who represents the European Universities alliance in the GF. Only the First Contact Point (or their appointed substitute/proxy) has voting rights.
- Each European Universities alliance may nominate up to three additional contact persons to be included in GF communication channels (mailing list and MS





Teams). These additional contacts may attend meetings but do not hold voting rights.

- 3. The First Contact Point of each European Universities alliances votes for the Chair and two Vice-Chairs of FOREU4ALL for a one-year term.
- 4. In cooperation with the WP1 Board, the Chair is responsible for convening and moderating the meetings of the GF, preparing the agenda, ensuring the implementation and follow-up of decisions and actions, and representing FOREU4ALL externally.
- 5. Two Vice-Chairs support the Chair in fulfilling abovementioned responsibilities and step in when the Chair is unavailable. Together, the Chair, Vice-Chairs and Co-Coordinators may delegate tasks among themselves or other members of the FB, as appropriate to ensure the efficient operation of FOREU4ALL.
- 6. The Chair and Vice-Chairs work in close collaboration with the Co-Coordinators in the WP1 Board and with the WP1 Project Officer to ensure that their strategic leadership is aligned with the objectives and activities of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project.
- 7. The Chair(s) of each topical group are invited to attend the General Forum and will be included in all relevant communications to remain informed. However, they shall not hold voting rights.

### 3.1.2. Role and responsibilities

The GF is free to act on own initiative to formulate proposals and take decisions in accordance with the procedures set out herein. The following decisions shall be taken by the GF:

- 1. Governance: election of the Chair and Vice-Chairs, the FB members and the possible extension of the EAB.
- 2. Appointment and evaluation of topical groups, overall oversight on the topical group activities, approval of the topical/ transversal workshop themes.
- 3. External communication (e.g., formal FOREU4ALL joint statements, participation in groups or events, positioning activities).
- Agenda and logistics: organisation of an in-presence meeting and/or event.





- 5. Finances outside of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project: proposals related to financial commitments.
- 6. Other decisions at the initiative of GF members and/or upon proposal of the FB or PMT.

## 3.1.3. Proceedings

- 1. The GF usually meets online once every two months according to a rolling agenda uploaded on MS Teams and sent out five working days in advance.
- 2. Meetings with external stakeholders, such as the European Commission, may be organised.
- 3. Decisions are made by consensus or, if not possible, simple majority. A veto right may only be exercised in exceptional circumstances where such a decision would result in severe adverse effects on the Alliance(s) affected.
- 4. Minutes will be shared after meetings and uploaded on MS Teams, within five working days.

#### 3.2 Forum Board

The FB is an elected body of the GF. It supports the strategic direction and decision making of the GF.

#### 3.2.1. Composition

The FB consists of 15 GF elected members for a one-year mandate, plus the members of the PMT. The elected FB Members are also the GF First Contact Point for their Alliance. The FB is supported by the FOREU4ALL Central Office.

The composition of the FB should reflect the diversity of the 65 European Universities alliances as much as possible. In the elections of the FB members, the GF is encouraged to consider the following elements:

1. Representation of the different generations of European Universities alliances.





- 2. Representation of Alliances which are either full or associated partners of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project.
- 3. Geographical balance across the countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), including non-EU partners.
- 4. Representation of the diverse profiles of HEIs (i.e., comprehensive universities, universities of applied sciences, art schools, conservatories, etc.).
- 5. Seniority of the candidate (especially for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions).

The FB members, including the FOREU4ALL Chair and Vice-Chairs, will be elected by the GF:

- 1. Elections are conducted annually.
- It is up to the Alliances to select their GF representative that will run for elections.
   The candidate should indicate if they will run for the role as FOREU4ALL Chair,
   GF Vice-Chairs and/or FB member.
- 3. The GF meeting in which the election is run may be held online.
- 4. FB members are elected for a one-year term.
- 5. European Universities alliances that are members of the PMT will not run for elections, as they are a permanent member of the FB.

### 3.2.2. Role and responsibilities

The FB members are responsible for:

- 1. Preparing the GF meetings, including strategic directions and proposals for GF decision making.
- 2. Ensuring the follow-up and implementation of decisions taken by the GF.
- 3. Proposing any relevant policy actions related to the European Universities alliances towards the European institutions and other key partners at European, national and regional level when relevant in collaboration with FOR-EU4All WP3 "Policy dialogue".
- 4. Ensuring the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project effectively contributes to the long-term and strategic development of the FOREU4ALL CoP.





5. The FOREU4ALL Chair, Vice-Chairs and project Co-Coordinators (WP1 board) oversee preparing the agenda of the FB and the EAB meetings.

## 3.2.3. Proceedings

- 1. The Chair is responsible for convening meetings of the FB, preparing the rolling agenda and chairing the meetings, including defining the decision and action points and their follow-up.
- 2. The FB usually meets online every month. The agenda is uploaded on MS Teams and sent out five working days in advance.
- 3. Each FB member holds one vote in FB decisions.
- 4. Decision is made by consensus or, if not possible, simple majority.
- 5. Minutes are uploaded on MS Teams and shared afterwards, within five working days.

### 3.3 Project Management Team

The PMT ensures coordination between the four Work Packages and governance bodies. It reports to the GF, FB and EAB.

#### 3.3.1. Composition

- 1. The PMT is composed of the Work Package Leads, the Work Package Co-Leads, and the FOREU4ALL Central Office.
- 2. The Work Packages (WPs) of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project are:
  - a) **WP1 "Management and Coordination**" lead by ECIU and co-lead by EC2U. The WP1 Board includes the Co-Coordinators of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project plus the FOREU4ALL Chair and Vice-Chairs.
  - b) WP2 "Community of Practice" lead by EC2U and co-lead by EPICUR. The WP2 Board includes the following European Universities alliances: ARQUS, EUTOPIA, E³UDRES², U!REKA SHIFT.





- c) WP3 "Policy Dialogue" lead by Circle U. and co-lead by Una Europa. The WP3 Board includes the following European Universities alliances: ARQUS, 4EU+, CHARM-EU, ECIU, ENLIGHT, EPICUR, EUniWell, EUTOPIA, E³UDRES², UNITA, U!REKA SHIFT.
- d) **WP4 "Communication and Dissemination"** lead by CHARM-EU and co-lead by ENHANCE. The WP4 Board includes the following European Universities alliances: FilmEU and NeurotechEU.

## 3.3.2. Role and responsibilities

#### The PMT is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project, including delivery of project tasks, milestones and deliverables as well as related reporting requirements.
- 2. WP1 ensures the overall project management and coordination among the governing bodies and the external representation.
- 3. WP2 supports the topical groups and their experts, and links them to relevant developments.
- 4. WP3 supports the exchange with policymakers at the European, national and regional level and monitoring, shaping and influencing of relevant policy developments.
- 5. WP4 supports external communication and dissemination through the website and social media channels.

## 3.3.3. Proceedings

- 1. The FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project Co-Coordinators are responsible for convening meetings of the PMT, preparing the agenda and chairing the meetings, including defining the decision and action points and their follow-up.
- The PMT meets online every month before the FB meeting according to a rolling agenda, the agenda is uploaded on MS Teams and sent out five working days in advance.





- 3. Minutes are uploaded on MS Teams and shared afterwards, within five working days.
- 4. Decision is made by consensus or, if not possible, simple majority.

#### 3.4 Central Office

The Central Office acts as a liaison among the different WPs and governance bodies, supporting smooth operation and communication as well as serving as the point of contact for internal and external requests.

#### 3.4.1. Composition

The FOREU4ALL Central Office is composed of three full-time equivalent Project Officers:

- 1. The Project & Policy Officer, located in Brussels at the ECIU Central Office, working mainly on WP1 and WP3 activities.
- 2. The Project Officer, located in Poitiers at the EC2U Global Coordination team Office, University of Poitiers, working mainly on WP2 activities.
- 3. The Communication Officer, located in Barcelona at the University of Barcelona, working mainly on WP4 activities.

## 3.4.2. Role and responsibilities

#### The Project & Policy Officer (WP1 & WP3):

- 1. Is responsible for the management of the FOR-EU4All Erasmus+ project and ensuring the progress of project activities and deliverables;
- 2. Maintains the contact lists of the governing bodies, supports the governing bodies and their meetings, including the PMT and WP1 Board meetings;
- 3. Facilitates proper collaboration and information flow between all project partners, full and associated partners and stakeholders;





- 4. Reports to the European Executive Agency (EACEA) about the project progress, in line with the GA requirements for continuous and periodic (mid-term and final report) reporting;
- 5. Supports the policy dialogue with European, national and regional policymakers in close collaboration with WP3;
- 6. Contributes to an open and collaborative space for addressing challenges to transnational collaboration based on Alliances' experiences;
- 7. Monitors relevant policies in higher education and research & innovation at all levels and reports to the Alliances about identified threats and opportunities;
- 8. Provides strategic input for communication and dissemination actions.

#### The Project Officer (WP2):

- 1. Manages and monitors the overall progress of WP2 activities and deliverables;
- 2. Supports the organisation of WP2 Board meetings;
- Facilitates communication with all WP2 actors (WP2 Board, topical group members, Group Chairing Teams) and external interested parties (when relevant);
- 4. Participates in the governing bodies meetings and liaises on WP2 activities and input;
- Monitors and supports the activities of the topical groups (e.g., providing templates, managing mailing lists and MS teams) and ensures that they comply with the project requirements (e.g., regular reporting, connections with WP3 and WP4, collaborations with other topical groups and participation in the calls for workshops);
- 6. Supports the organisation of the topical/transversal workshops;
- 7. Prepares and writes WP2 deliverables.

#### The Communication Officer (WP4):

1. Designs, implements and consistently monitors the communication and dissemination strategy of FOREU4ALL;





- 2. Acts as the bridge between the FOREU4ALL WP4's team and the 65 European Universities alliances' communication managers and officers;
- 3. Gathers data and develops content including social media posts, articles, and visuals.
- 4. Supports and maximises the dissemination of outputs from the work packages involved;
- 5. Manages the project website and prepares periodic reports on progress and impact.

## 3.4.3. Proceedings

- 1. The Central Office meets online every week for 30 minutes updates and in person approximately twice per year.
- 2. The work is done in a shared and collaborative way, mainly through MS Teams.

### 3.5 External advisory Board

The External Advisory Board (EAB) ensures the link to the wider higher education sector in FOREU4ALL.

#### 3.5.1. Composition

The following organisations are the inaugural permanent members of the EAB: <u>EUA</u>, <u>EURASHE</u>, <u>ENQA</u>, <u>ESU</u> and <u>ESN</u>. Additional members may be appointed by the GF. Future additional EAB members will be considered in dialogue with the current EAB members to ensure a balanced and complementary representation of the sector.

#### 3.5.2. Role and responsibilities

The EAB is responsible for:

1. Ensuring links between FOREU4ALL and relevant developments in the wider higher education sector.





- 2. Advising on the development of FOREU4ALL.
- Supporting FOREU4ALL activities, such as dissemination activities, relevant EU
  policy initiatives, FOREU4ALL Policy Learning Labs, topical workshops or topical
  groups' meetings.
- 4. Providing relevant updates to the GF during a GF meeting or with a written notice.

## 3.5.3. Proceedings

- 1. The EAB shall meet at least twice a year.
- 2. The FOREU4ALL Chair, with the WP1 Board, is responsible for convening meetings of the EAB, preparing the agenda and chairing the meetings, including defining the decisions and action points and their follow-up. The GF Chair is supported by the FOREU4ALL Central Office.
- 3. The agenda and the minutes of the EAB meetings will be shared with the EAB members and uploaded on MS Teams to ensure that the GF has access.
- 4. EAB members shall be allowed to participate in the GF upon invitation/request.

### 3.5.4 External engagement strategy

The wider higher education sector, students, policymakers at the local, national and European level and external stakeholders are a target audience of FOREU4ALL to disseminate best practices and ensure links with wider developments. To ensure that, FOREU4ALL engages the EAB as follows:

- EAB members are welcome to participate at the GF to share relevant initiatives, invitations, developments, reports. Any EAB member wishing to attend or contribute at the GF is requested to coordinate in advance with the WP1 Project Officer and WP1 Board.
- 2. EAB members are welcome to share relevant initiatives, invitations, developments, and reports with the GF through MS Teams, the FOREU4ALL social media channels, and the FOREU4ALL website. To facilitate this, they are kindly requested to coordinate with the WP4 Project Officer.





- 3. EAB members are welcome to participate in relevant activities of the topical groups, including the eight FOREU4ALL workshops. The modalities for participation must be coordinated with the Chair & Vice-Chair of the topical group and the WP2 Project Officer.
- 4. EAB members are welcome to contribute to the development of WP3 activities and will be invited to the Policy Learning Labs.
- 5. Regular exchanges with representatives of the wider sector take place. EAB members are invited to co-develop the agenda for such exchanges, and attend meetings with representatives of the wider sector to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices.

## 4. Communication, dissemination and brand management

- 1. MS Teams is the primary platform for ongoing communication, sharing documents, surveys, templates and information.
- 2. MS Teams is the repository for meeting agendas and minutes.
- 3. MS Teams is the repository for deliverable and reporting templates, included in Annex III and Annex IV of this Governance Framework.
- 4. MS Teams will be the repository of European Union and FOREU4ALL logo and templates. These resources will be shared in the channel 'Graphic materials and templates'.
- 5. Communication and dissemination activities related to FOREU4ALL must include the initiative's logo, acknowledge the EU support and display the European flag (emblem), co-funding statement and disclaimer (translated into local languages, where appropriate).







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- 6. Further guidelines on brand management will be detailed in the FOREU4ALL's Communication and Dissemination Strategy.
- 7. It is the responsibility of each European Universities alliance's representatives in the GF to ensure access to MS Teams. The Central Office and ECIU helpdesk provide support as needed.

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- 5. Annex I Consortium Agreement
- 6. Annex II Grant Agreement
- 7. Annex III Deliverable template & Report template