



MANIFESTO EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES U!REKA FOR CLIMATE-NEUTRAL SMART CITIES

A partnership of seven urban-focused higher education institutions in Europe, the Urban Research and Education Knowledge Alliance (U!REKA), is taking major steps **towards more integrated collaboration enhancing Europe's climate neutrality goals**. As international applied research, innovation, and education network, with a longstanding collaboration since 2016, U!REKA's **ambition is to educate, shape, and deliver the European professionals of tomorrow as orchestrators of smart, sustainable and inclusive Europe**.

TOWARDS CLIMATE NEUTRALITY AND BEYOND

U!REKA is on a mission to enhance the twin transition and a goal of Europe achieving climate neutrality by 2050. As recognized in the EU's mission for climate-neutral and smart cities, urban areas have a crucial role in the journey toward a climate-neutral Europe. We U!REKA partners are focusing our longstanding common work in education and research, development and innovation (RDI) to support our cities and a wider network of European cities to achieve

the ambitious goals of 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030, and in a wider European context by 2050. The selected 100 cities for the EU's mission include five of the cities where our universities are located in. To strengthen our European cooperation and to give the best possible education to our students and support local cities, regions and ecosystems in Europe, we strive to transform our U!REKA alliance into one of the ambitious European Universities.

EDUCATION AND RDI TO SUPPORT THE CITIES ON A MISSION

It has been recognised that climate mitigation is very dependent on urban action. We collaborate with local cities and their stakeholders to accelerate green and digital transition. Education as well as innovative and applicable RDI solutions have an essential role to play. By answering to the needs at a

local level, in our cities, regions and ecosystems, as well as our students, the future professionals, we want to provide the best possible education to counteract climate change and support cities and regions to achieve climate neutrality and beyond. Through this, we can make an impact.

FUTURE PROOF SKILLS ARE NEEDED

To make the change happen and get permanent future proof results, we need the right set of skills. At U!REKA we collaborate tightly with private and public sector to provide education that responds to the needs and challenges of our society and equips both students and lifelong learners with the skills required to act as change-makers. As an example, at U!REKA we have a joint Change-Makers programme in which students across universities and disciplines work on the challenges, such as:

“How can we create more public awareness about the sustainable use of water across different European cities, taking into account socio-cultural, health- and climate-related economic dimensions”. As U!REKA EUI alliance, we aim to create and establish joint multidisciplinary education, covering the key areas of climate neutrality, integrated with our applied and practice-based research, development and innovation activities with local cities, regions, citizens, professional associations and companies.



ABOUT U!REKA

The ambitions of our U!REKA Alliance are made of our identity and the fundament that unites us. In U!REKA we aspire to equip our talented students and learners with the skills they need for the world of work. Being responsive to our metropolitan ecosystems is at the very centre of all our actions and it is visible both in our education as well as RDI. These professionals will contribute to an inclusive, intercultural, and open-minded professional Europe. U!REKA commits itself to strengthening the quality and visibility of European professional education in the world-wide marketplace for talent.

U!REKA's impact stretches across the four regions of the European Higher Education Area, covering approximately 11.4 million European citizens. U!REKA has a total student body of approximately 150 000 students, and the combined number of staff is about 13 000. Since its establishment, U!REKA has successfully established joint education in form of [blended intensive programs](#), [lecture series](#), [Change Agents program](#) and supported blended, virtual and physical mobility of its staff and students. We have initiated joint European RDI projects such as ongoing Erasmus+ projects [SusTexEdu](#) (Education Partnership of Textile and Clothing Sector Materials & Sustainability) and ICI (Inclusive Comprehensive Internationalisation).

U!REKA partners:

- Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands
- Edinburgh Napier University, United Kingdom
- HOGENT University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Belgium
- Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Germany
- Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Finland
- VSB – Technical University of Ostrava, Czech Republic
- Politécnico de Lisboa, Portugal

For further information regarding U!REKA EUI bid, please contact:

Mona Roman
Innovation Director
Metropolia University of Applied Sciences
Email: mona.roman@metropolia.fi

