Testing and Implementing HEI Acceleration services

28th November 2025

Rimante Rusaite, UIIN, Senior Project Officer
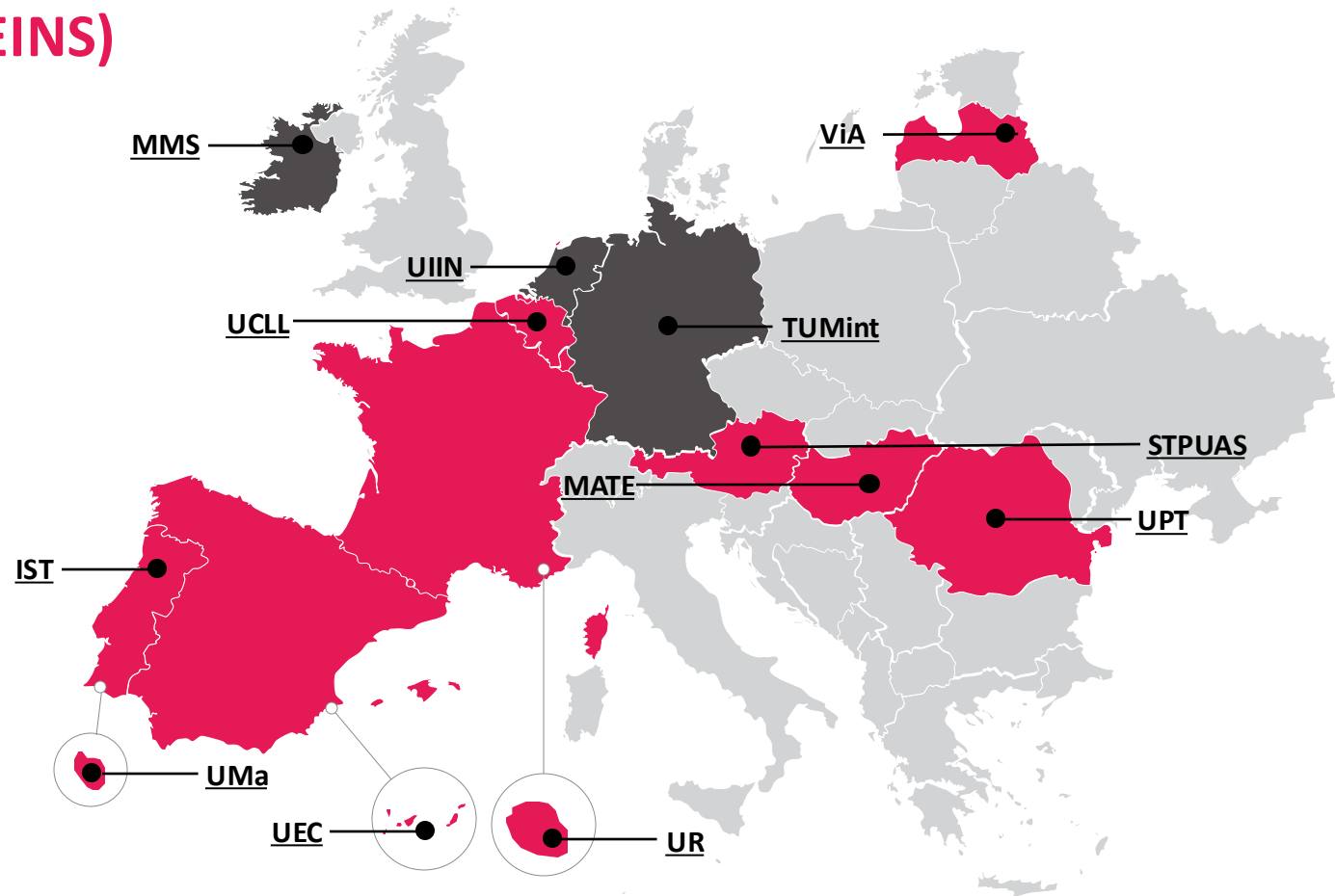
Our Consortium

■ **9 Testing Partners (INCORE + EINS)**

■ **3 Acceleration Partners**

MMS

ViA

UIIN

UCLL

TUMint

STPUAS

MATE

UPT

IST

UMa

UEC

UR

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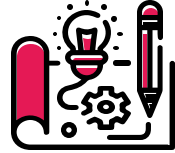
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OBJECTIVES

IDENTIFY
the status quo of each HEI and its ecosystem regarding entrepreneurial and innovative activities.

DEVELOP
test and implement acceleration services that help institutions undertake a transformation roadmap and projects.

BUILD
the capacity of the participating HEIs' staff to implement the transformation roadmaps through **a skills development program.**

EVALUATE
the strategies from HEIs supervised by an 'Acceleration Board' of **independent experts**.

GENERATE
policy feedback to the European Commission as well as provide widespread dissemination of the pilot results to other target groups.

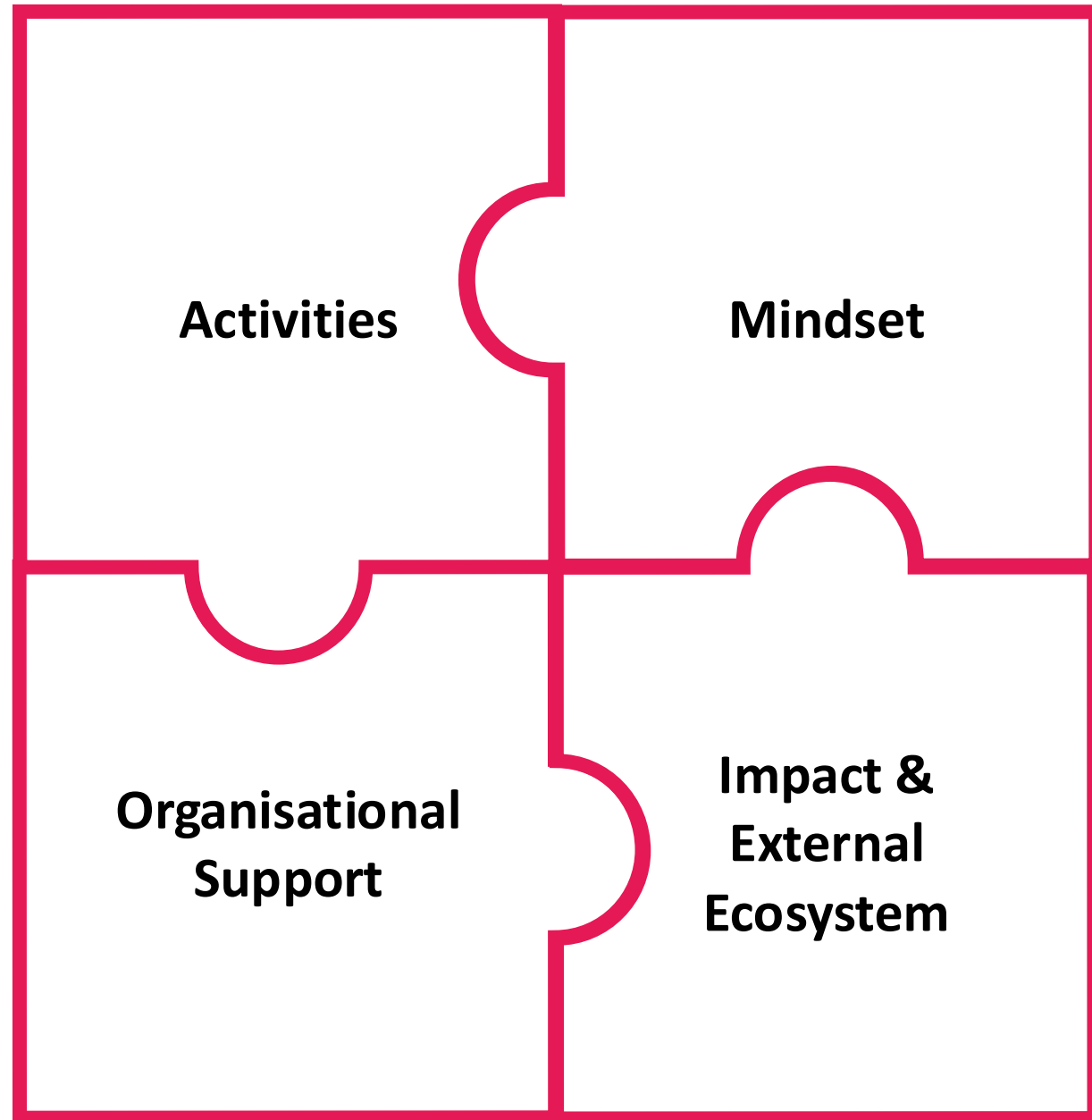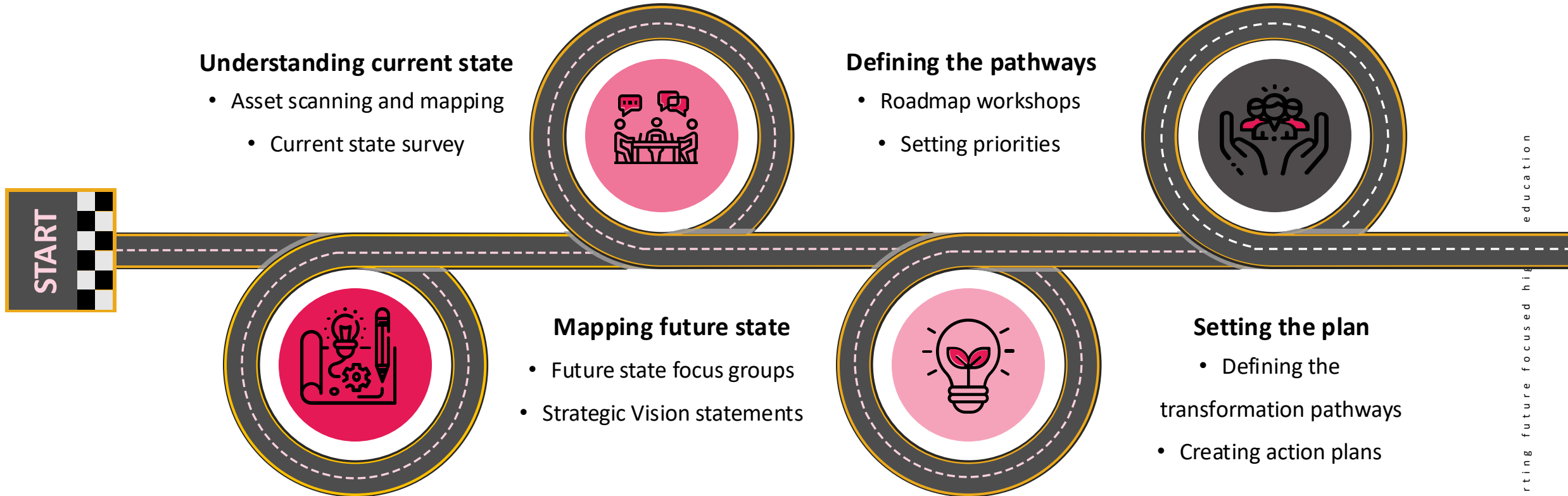supporting future focused higher education

Framework

UIIN Entrepreneurial and Innovative University Framework © as foundation for the methodology to:

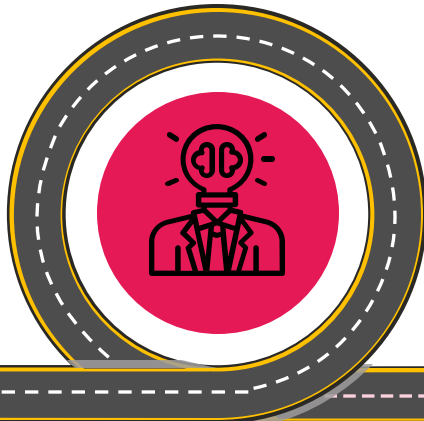- Identify desired future state
- Map current state
- Develop roadmap to achieve goals

Activities

Mindset

Organisational Support

Impact & External Ecosystem

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Acceleration Services Phase 1

Understanding current state

- Asset scanning and mapping
- Current state survey

Defining the pathways

- Roadmap workshops
- Setting priorities

Mapping future state

- Future state focus groups
- Strategic Vision statements

Setting the plan

- Defining the transformation pathways
- Creating action plans

START

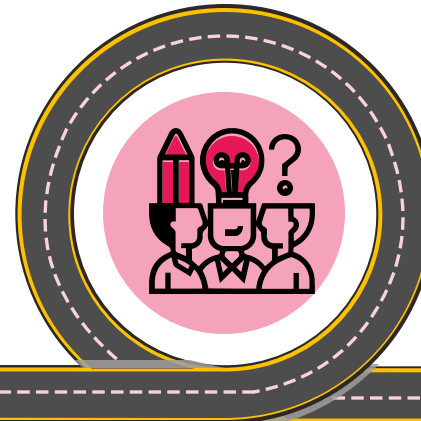supporting future focused higher education

Acceleration Services Phase 2

Monitoring and evaluation
- Impact workshops
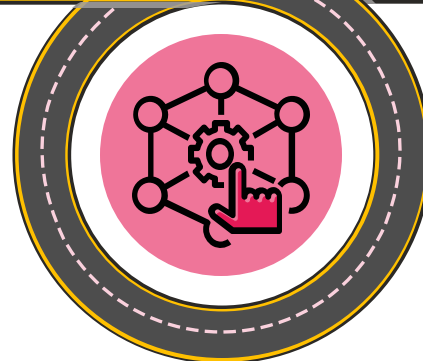- Progress tracking and updates

Communication
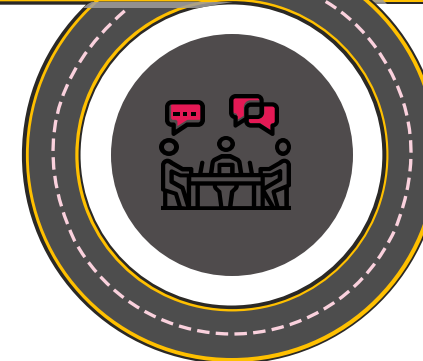- Storytelling & outreach
- Stakeholder engagement

Capacity Building & Knowledge Sharing
- Training courses
- Coaching by mentors
- Working group sessions

Forward-looking
- Cohort knowledge exchange events
- Investment strategy workshops

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Transformation Pathways: examples

ViA (Latvia): Regional Ecosystem Engagement

- **Business Laboratory 2025**: 37 students trained, 3 winning regional grants.

- **Youth Innovation Forum**: 138 participants (students, teachers, pupils), masterclasses on entrepreneurship, policy dialogue with schools.

- **Strong municipal collaboration** with 3 regions (Cēsis, Limbaži, Smiltene).

Biznesa laboratorija 2025

Ievads uzņēmējdarbībā un dizaina domāšanā | Inovāciju veidi | Mentoru konsultācijas | Biznesa modeļa izstrāde | Digitālais mārketings un zīmols | Finanšu vadība | Prezentācijas prasmes

VIDZEME UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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UCLL (Belgium): Institutional Transformation through Curriculum

- **Donut Economics Handbook:** new foundation for economics courses.
- **Multiplying impact:** Handbook will become available for other University Colleges in Flanders (via publisher).
- **SME/NGO Collaboration**: student projects on sustainability & social innovation for regional organisations (CIMIO and VOKA)

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IST (Portugal): BuildHub - Entrepreneurship in the Built Environment

- **Thematic Entrepreneurship Hub** aligned with Técnico Venture Lab.
- **Activities**: co-creation workshops, hackathons, mentorship sessions, funding strategies.
- **Impact Pathways:** external advisory boards for curricula, industry partnerships, mentoring hours, new startup pipeline, multi-stakeholder collaboration (university–business–government).

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TÉCNICO LISBOA

UEC (Spain): Breaking Down Silos Across Faculties

- **Shared KPIs across 3 faculties** (first time ever).
- **New innovation spaces**: CEOE Center (2024), labs in architecture.
- **Joint student activities**: LEIN CAMP, Hunger4Innovation, Dream BIG.
- **Systemic change:** acceleration services catalysed interfaculty collaboration & mindset shift.

Universidad Europea

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Challenges for EU Policy: Leadership commitment and cultural changes

- **EU level**
  - Require clear evidence of **leadership commitment** in WIDERA calls;
  - Ensure EU research career frameworks value transformation and engagement roles.
- **National**
  - Fund **leadership mentoring and training** to build strategic ownership at senior and mid-levels.
  - Recognize and reward active governance participation.
- **Institutional**
  - Embed transformation goals into governance processes.
  - **Reform promotion criteria** to reward innovation, engagement, and transformation work.
  - Foster intercultural understanding and flexible collaboration models.

Challenges for EU Policy: Institutional capacity and coordination

- **EU level/National**
    - Funding programs should **support cross-departmental coordination** and peer-learning mechanisms to strengthen internal alignment.
    - Establish funding schemes for **shared infrastructure and training** within Alliances and regional networks.

- **Institutional**
    - Establishing **central transformation steering groups** with department-level focal points, clear roles and incentives for participation (e.g. teaching relief, recognition mechanisms of the effort).
    - Providing clear onboarding materials, training, and well-defined roles and responsibilities for institutional contact points leading transformation efforts.

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"Transformation is about aligning vision, tools, and people for systemic change"

Rimante Rusaite
Senior Project Officer
rusaite@uiin.org

www.acceleratefuturehei.eu