Webinar
INSPIRING ERA, aUPaEU, ACCELERATE FUTURE HEIs & CATALISI

CONNECTING POLICIES AND PROJECTS: ADVANCING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA TOGETHER

28/11/2025
11:00h - 13:00h CET

Online (Free registration)

Funded by the European Union

INSPIRING ERA

CATALISI

aUPa EU

accelerate futureHEI
supporting future focused higher education

CONNECTING POLICIES AND PROJECTS: ADVANCING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA TOGETHER

This webinar series offers Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) insights and strategies for institutional transformation, featuring expert speakers who share best practices, research findings, and actionable strategies.

CATALISI
Webinar

Register now!

28/11/2025 |. 11.00-13.00 CEST

11:00 – 11:10
Welcome and Opening remarks
APRE & EY

11:10 – 11:25
The ERA Policy context
Maria Mecenero, Policy Officer, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), European Commission

11:25 – 11:45
INSPIRING ERA: Understanding and raising awareness on the ERA
Philip Ackermann, Project Coordinator INSPIRING ERA, DLR Project Management Agency

11:45 – 12:05
A concrete example on R&I institutional transformation: integrating public engagement and Citizen Science into University research practices
Eglė Butkevičienė, Head of Committee for Political Science, Sociology and Public Governance Kaunas University of Technology (KTU)

12:05 – 12:50
Results and recommendations from WIDERA project on the empowerment of HEIs in line with the ERA
Laura Mentini & Stefania Laneve, PC CATALISI, (APRE);
Rimante Rusaite, Senior Project Officer and Project Coordinator Accelerate Future HEI, University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN);
Jesus Alcober, Associate Professor and Project Coordinator aUPaEU (UPC)

12:50 – 13:00
Q&A and wrap-up
Suhida Dermani, Senior Consultant (EY)

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Access to CATALISI webinars recordings

CATALISI

Catalysation of institutional transformations of Higher Education Institutions through the adoption of acceleration services

Results and recommendations from WIDERA project on the empowerment of HEIs in line with the ERA

CATALISI Webinar, ***Connecting policies and projects: Advancing the European Research Area together***, 28 November 2025

Laura Mentini, Project Manager, APRE – Agency for the Promotion of European Research

Stefania Laneve, Project Manager, APRE – Agency for the Promotion of European Research

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Funded by the European Union Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Context and Rationale

CATALISI, Accelerate Future HEI and **aUPaEU** are three sister projects funded under the same Horizon Europe topic: HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ERA-01-51.

- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as **drivers of change** in alignment with the **European Research Area (ERA)** objectives and the **Higher Education Transformation Agenda**
- EC pushes to take action by **developing strategies, tools** and **services** that can help HEIs in drawing up **roadmaps** for institutional changes contributing to a **new governance framework** responding to societal missions

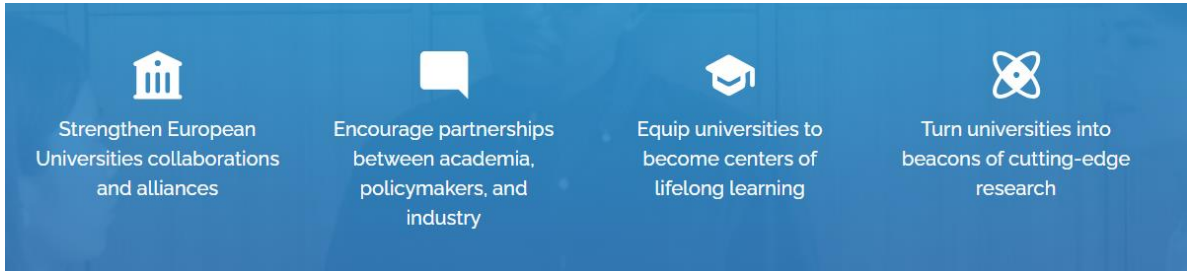
To respond to this call, the 3 projects are developing and piloting concrete **acceleration services** and **institutional transformation models** to help HEIs modernise their structures and embrace ERA priorities, by ultimately contributing to **ERA Action 13**, *Empower Higher Education Institutions to develop in line with the ERA*

CATALISI Aim

To help and support Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to successfully implement a strategy and individual pathway for institutional transformation through the adoption of 7 innovative acceleration services.

These acceleration services are designed to facilitate and accelerate institutional transformations in the field of R&I with the ultimate aim of strengthening European universities collaborations across regions to maximize the value of research and its impact, to govern the transformations affecting science and innovation, to produce and disseminate high-quality knowledge.

OUR GOALS



CATALISI Consortium

11 partners

8 EU countries

3 Widening Countries

Facilitators

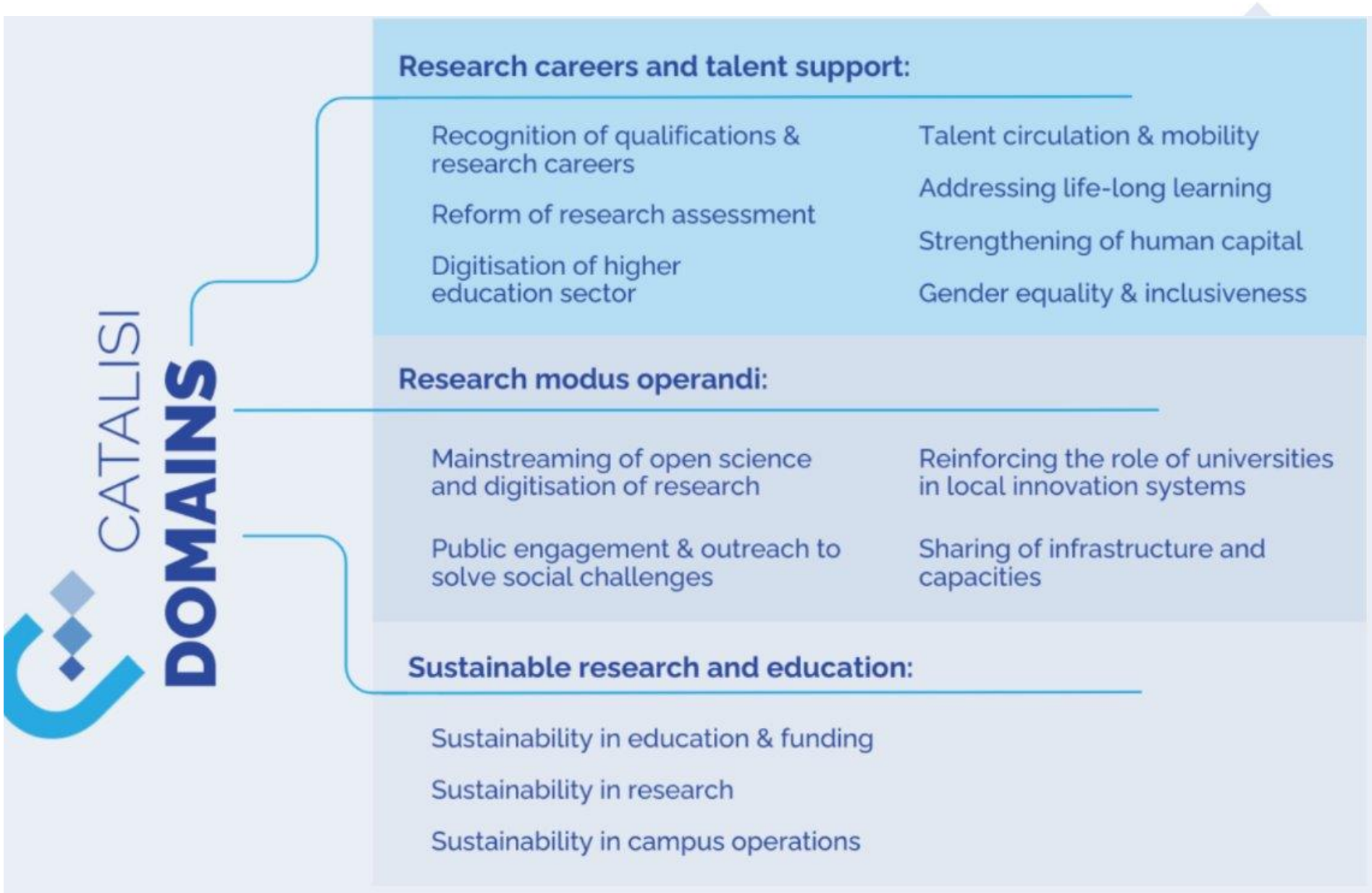
- Acceleration services;
- Knowledge transfer;
- Implementation of activities co-designed.

Implementers

Higher Education Institutions

Introduce and implement new reforms in their structures

CATALISI R&I Intervention Areas



Living Lab

Leverage a co-creation methodology for university innovation development

Counselling

Empower HEIs through mentoring and coaching

Transformational Pathway

Enhance HEIs' ability to respond to societal challenges effectively

ACCELERATION SERVICES

HEIs Institutional Change

Predictive Study on Skills Anticipation

Support in re-thinking investments in education and training

Community of Practice

Share experiences and good practices on institutional changes

Capacity Building and Outreach

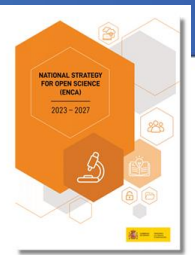
Invest in human resources to foster economic growth, social development, and innovation

Catalyst Hub

Digital platform designed to facilitate cooperation

CATALISI Acceleration services

7 Acceleration services are designed to facilitate and catalyze the process of institutional transformation of HEIs in the field of Research and Innovation (R&I) and are characterized by an innovative feature that crosses the domains.



Main results of transformation

University	Intervention Area	Acceleration services & actions	Transformation Results
UJI *Spain*	• Research careers • Research assessment • Open Science	Twinnings; Living Lab; Counselling; Design Lab. Deliberations, focus groups, consultations, survey	• Launch of **OS Strategy** • **Training program** and conferences for PhD students on research ethics and scientific evaluation practices • Plan to **reform scientific evaluation system** • **Code on ethical principles** to foster transparent research
LUISS *Italy*	• Open Science • Talent mobility • Public engagement • Sustainability in research	MML workshops; Twinnings; Counselling Awareness raising, public events, trainings, seminars	• Launch of **OS Strategy** • Newsbook, publications on Research & Third Mission entirely dedicated to OS • **New policies and incentives schemes to attract research talents** and participation in programmes such as MSCA and ERC

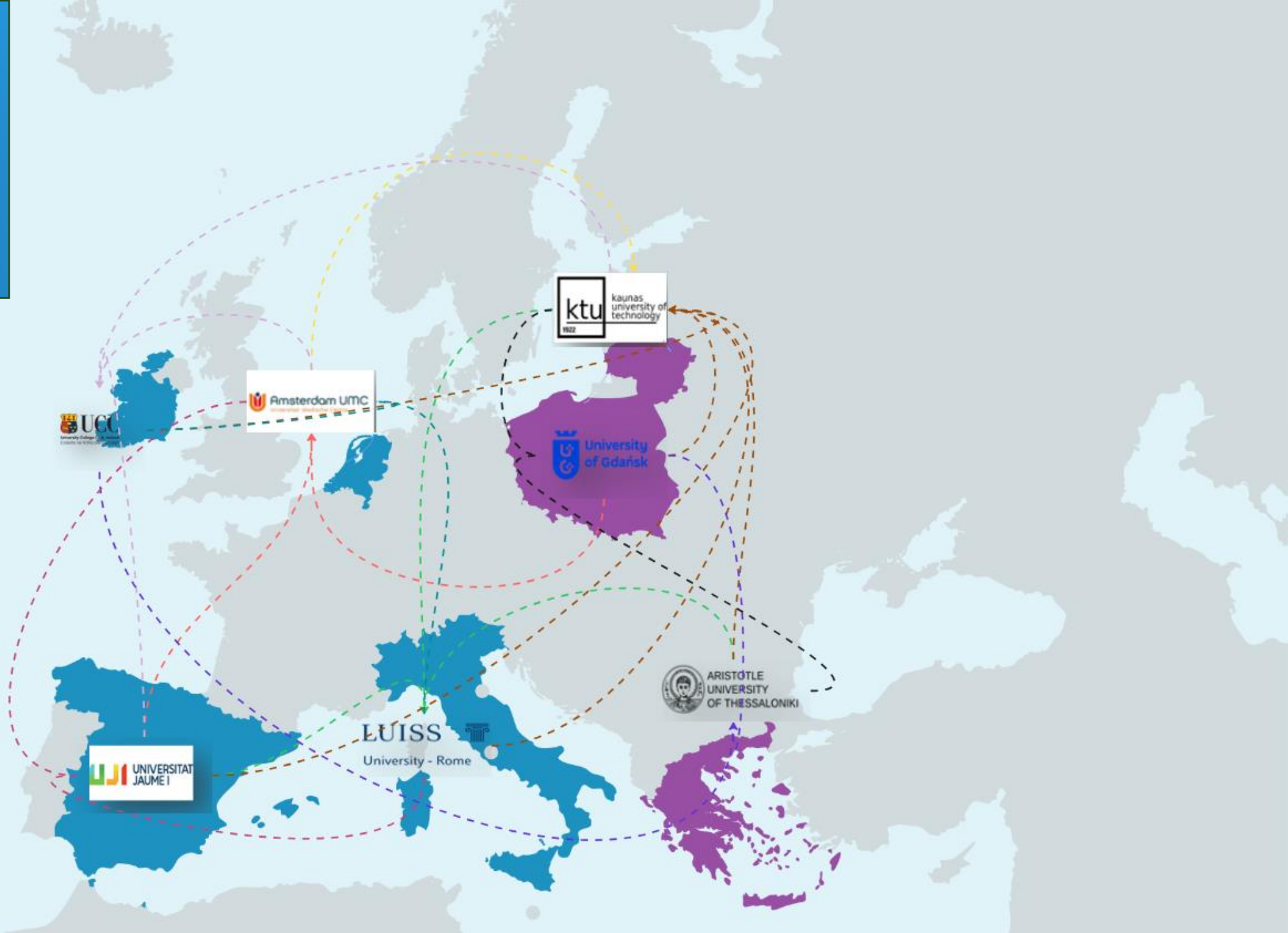
Main results of transformation

University	Intervention Area	Acceleration services & actions	Transformation Results
UG *Poland*	• Research careers • Public engagement • Sustainability in campus operations	Twinnings; Living Lab; Counselling; Design Lab. Staff training & business, awareness raising, support center	• New **center providing career and IP guidance** • **Customer journey map for R&I services** • Development of **Bachelor and master programs fostering science-companies-society dialogue** • Establishment of **CS Lab**
UCC *Ireland*	• Sustainability in research	Living Lab; MML; Twinnings; Design Lab; Counselling; CoP Strategic model of income allocation, key stakeholder engagement	• **Embedding LL into university** • New **Revised Overhead Model** and new funding income streams • **New grant** in relation to community-led research scheme and research culture transformation • Development of a **robust participatory evaluation approach**

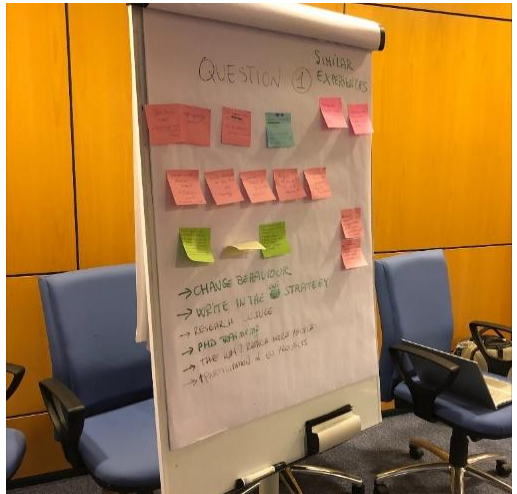
Main results of transformation

University	Intervention Area	Acceleration services & actions	Transformation Results
AUTH *Greece*	• Research careers and assessment • Open Science • Digitisation of research • Sustainability in research	Living Lab LL certifications, awareness and accessibility, tools, platforms, frameworks, Centralized database	• New **framework for research assessment and qualifications recognition** • Integration of **MOOCs** on digital health innovation, medical technology and responsible research practices • **Training sessions on OA practices**
AUMC *Netherlands*	• Research careers • Research assessment	Living Lab; MML; Design Lab Awareness raising, network, learning pathway, policy connections	• **Establishment of Research Integrity and OS center (RIOS)** • Development of a **training format for supervisors** «Mpowering Responsible Supervision» • **2 Research Culture studies** • **Theatre play** on stimulating reflection on a positive Reseach Culture

CATALISI connections & exchanges



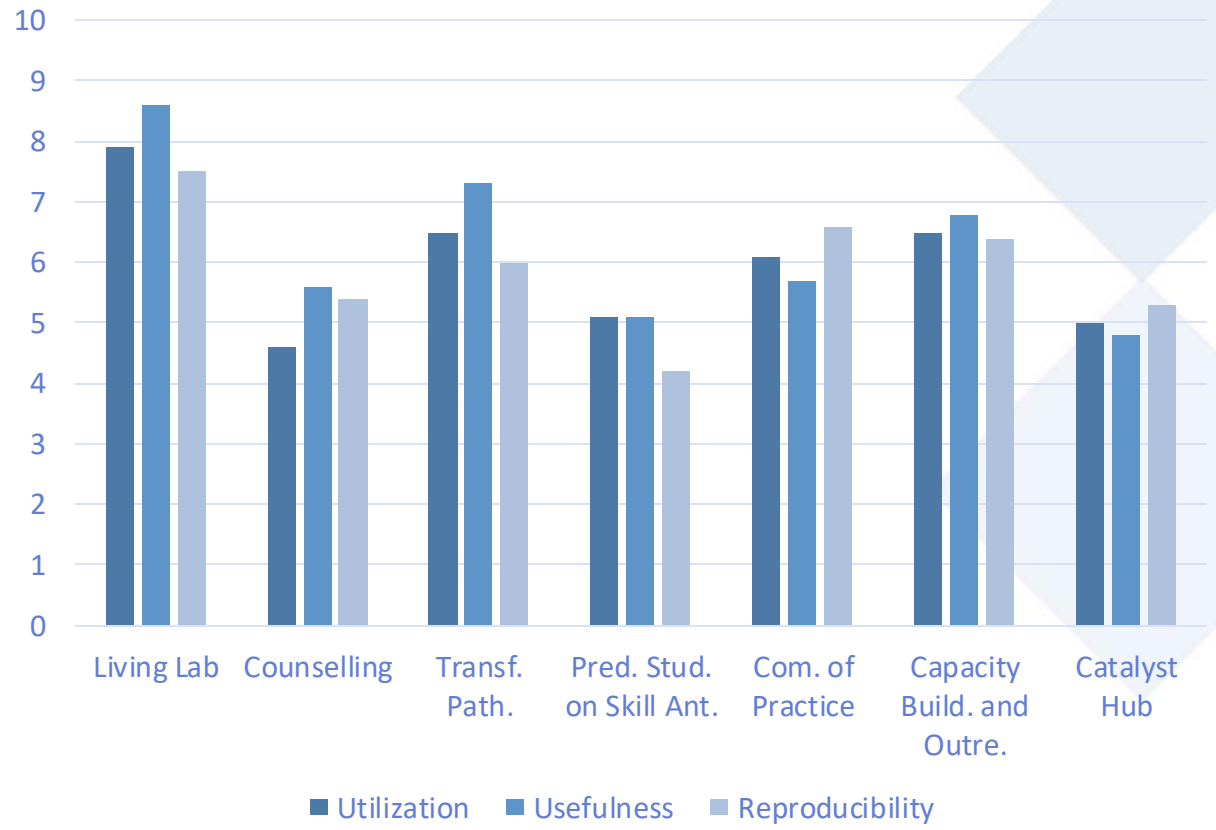
REGIONAL CONTEXT
KAUNAS


QUESTION 1
SIMILAR EXERCISES
→CHANGE BEHAVIOUR
→WRITE IN THE STRATEGY

Results & success factors

- **86%** of activities in HEIs action plans were integrated at a university-wide (strategic level).
- **6 out of the 7** HEIs received support from department heads in conducting their actions; **5 out of 7** received support at a vice-rector/vice-president level.
- Facilitating Partners played **a key supporting role**, offering methodological guidance, administrative assistance, and strategic mentoring.
- Importance of **cross-institutional learning, cultural change and capacity building**.
- **Unanticipated outcomes** emerged, including new collaborations, new funding streams (Interreg), and stakeholder engagements (AUMC, UCC, UJI Survey), etc.

Utilization, usefulness and reproducibility of the CATALISI Acceleration Services (All Partners) - mean average scores 0 to 10.



Key takeaways

- CATALISI contributed to **positive institutional transformation** across participating HEIs, with a range of **tangible achievements**/transformations in the 7 case studies
- CATALISI has proven an **excellent testbed** for the experiment and trial-in-use of Acceleration Services: integration of new frameworks, and adoption of co-creation methodologies.
- → ***Yet …*** Institutional change in line with the ERA is a **complex, multidimensional and timely** process for HEIs requiring the engagement of **ecosystems of actors and levers** from institutional, national, European contexts.

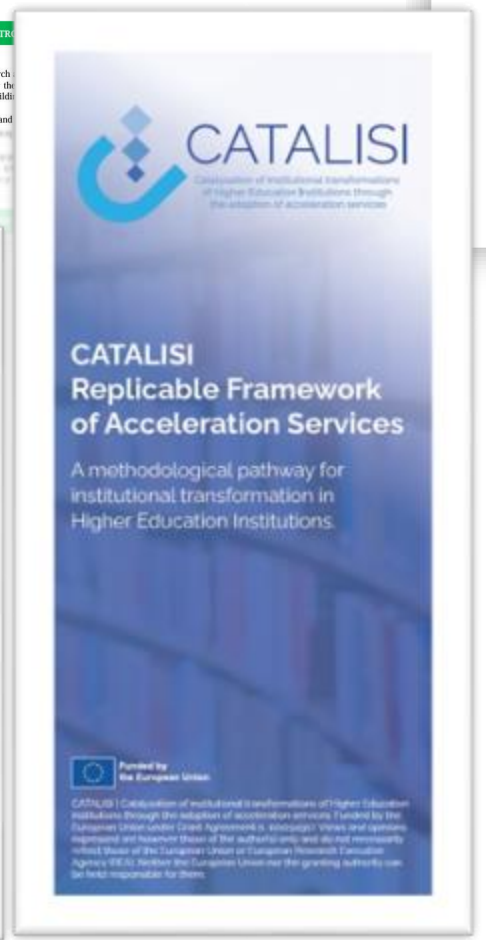
RECOMMENDATION: Shared definition and operational framework for acceleration services

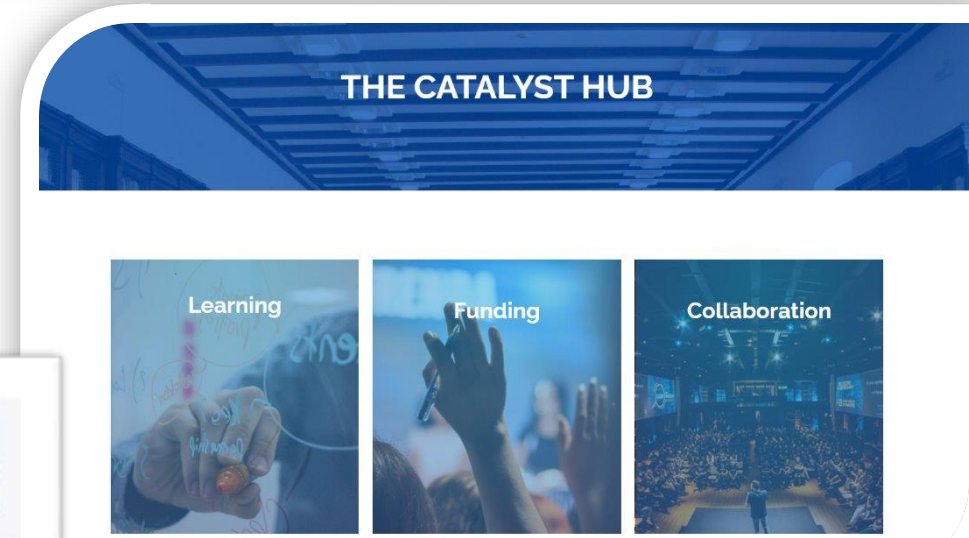
EU level	National level	HEIs/Alliances
❑ Promote modular and flexible acceleration service **frameworks** adapted to HEI needs. ❑ Develop a common typology and **taxonomy** of acceleration services. ❑ Potentially reduce number of acceleration services (**primary and secondary**), including clearer definitions and descriptions.	❑ Provide practical guidance and **financial/policy instruments** that support institutions in deploying such services	❑ **Embed and prioritize** high-impact acceleration services in long-term governance and strategic planning, and not just treat them as project tools. ❑More mutual learning, structured twinning and **in-person exchanges** to advance impact and collaboration ❑**Support** other HEIs to replicate proven AS with guidance or mentoring

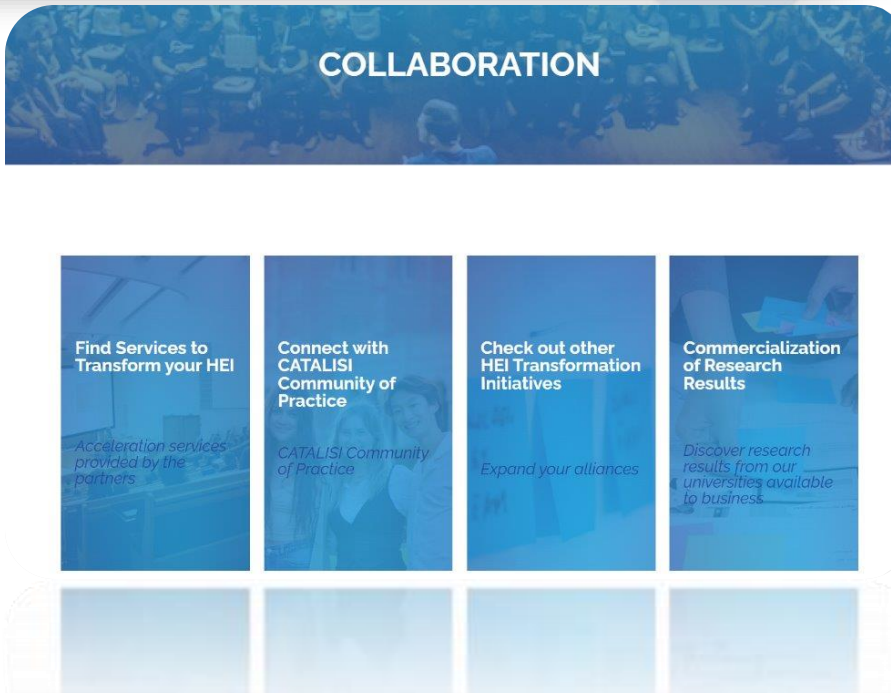
RECOMMENDATION: Prioritisation and focus of transformation efforts

EU level	National level	HEIs/Alliances
❑ Future WIDERA calls should clearly define **key transformation domains** and promote phased approaches focused on high-priority areas.	❑ Diagnostic and self-assessment tools to help HEIs **identify 3–5 priority areas** for transformation, aligning them with national and European strategic goals.	❑ Use internal action plans and strategic frameworks to select the domains with the **highest transformative potential**. ❑ Right balance between **ambition and realism** on what can be achieved during a period. ❑ **Narrow the focus** on a reduced number of intervention areas and domain ❑ **Align** transformation efforts to national reforms and EU frameworks for deeper change (e.g. DORA, CoARA frameworks).

Resources & legacy







CATALISI

Thank you!

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