

D3.1

KreativEU

Study

Protocol and

Methodology

Version 1.0 | December 2025



D3.1

KreativEU Study Protocol and Methodology

Project Acronym:	KreativEU
Project full title:	Knowledge and Creativity European University
Project No:	101177256
Funding Scheme:	ERASMUS + Programme under call ERASMUS-EDU-2024-EUR-UNIV
Coordinator:	IPT – Instituto Politécnico de Tomar, Portugal
Project start date:	01 January 2025
Project end date:	31 December 2028
Project duration:	48 months

Deliverable:	D3.1 – KreativEU Study Protocol and Methodology
Contractual date:	31 March 2025 (M15)
Deliverable date:	25 March 2026 (M15)
Work Package:	WP3 – Research
Task:	T3.1 – Joint Thematic Strategy
Version:	1.0
Contributors:	This deliverable was produced by the KreativEU WP3 Team (led by Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích and Politechnika Opolska) with contributions from all partners.
Description:	This document will set the ground rules and protocols to follow for setting-up the coordination and the production of research-based materials in KreativEU during and after the pilot phase. Includes joint methodology. It will also contain the goals, expected results and exploitation plan for the production resulting from the joint endeavour.
Dissemination level:	PU - Public

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 the European Education and Culture Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Contents

PART A: THE DELIVERABLE	5
1 Acronyms and Abbreviations	5
2 Definitions	7
3 Executive Summary	9
4 D3.1 KreativEU Study Methodology and Protocol	10
Introduction	10
Chapter 1: Code of Conduct	12
Chapter 2: Research Integrity	14
Chapter 3: Gender Issues	17
Chapter 4: Open Science	19
Chapter 5: Science for Policy	21
Chapter 6: Responsible Use of AI in Research	24
Chapter 7: Research Security	27
Chapter 8: Sustainability in Research	30
Chapter 9: Research Ethics	32
Appendix	35
Conclusion	43
PART B: DEVELOPMENT, METHODOLOGY, IMPACT AND POTENTIAL OF THE DELIVERABLE	44
1 Methodology and Development of the KreativEU Study Protocol and Methodology	44
1.1 Development of time table	44
1.2 Formation of working groups	44
1.3 Involvement of other WP Teams and KreativEU governing bodies	44
1.4 Collection of information from all partner institutions	44
1.5 Alignment of the deliverable with local rules and regulations	45
1.6 Draft of structure of deliverable	45
1.7 Draft of first version of deliverable	45
1.8 Consultation and assessment by responsible WP and other relevant KreativEU bodies	46
1.9 Creation of final version	46
2 Updating the KreativEU Study Protocol and Methodology	47
3 Impact and potential for innovation	48
3.1 Added Value	48
3.2 Potential for innovation	49

PART A: THE DELIVERABLE

1 Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym / Abbreviation	Full Term
Benef.	Beneficiary
GB	Governance bodies
ATU	ADANA ALPARSLAN TÜRKİŞ BİLİM VE TEKNOLOJİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ - Adana Alparslan Türkış Science and Technology University (ATU), Türkiye
BUas	BREDA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES (BUas), Netherlands
IPT	INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE TOMAR - Polytechnic University of Tomar (IPT), Portugal,
OUTech	POLITECHNIKA OPOLSKA – Opole University of Technology (OUTech), Poland
SH	SÖDERTÖRNS HÖGSKOLA - Södertörn University (SH), Sweden
TAE	СТОПАНСКА АКАДЕМИЯ „ДИМИТЪР А. ЦЕНОВ“ - D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics (TAE), Bulgaria
TUT	TRNAVSKÁ UNIVERZITA V TRNAVE – University of Trnava (TUT), Slovakia
USB	Jihočeská univerzita v českých budějovicích - University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (USB), Czechia
UNICAM	UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI CAMERINO - University of Camerino (UNICAM), Italy
UG	UNIVERSITÄT GREIFSWALD - University of Greifswald (UG), Germany
VUT	UNIVERSITATEA VALAHIA DIN TÂRGOVIȘTE - Valahia University of Targoviste (VUT), Romania
WP	Work Package
WP1	Work package 1 - Governance and Management
WP2	Work package 2 - KreativEU Education
WP3	Work package 3 - KreativEU Research
WP4	Work package 4 - KreativEU Culture with and for society
WP5	Work package 5 - KreativEU knowledge-creation and design network on smart sustainability

Acronym / Abbreviation	Full Term
WP6	Work package 6 - KreativEU Heritage European campus
WP7	Work package 7 - KreativEU Mobility
WP8	Work package 8 - KreativEU communication, dissemination, exploitation
WP_Co-Leaders	Work Package Co-Leaders
WP_Leaders	Work Package Leaders
WP_Team	Work Package Team
AI	Artificial Intelligence
FAIR	Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
genAI	Generative AI
LLM	Large Language Model
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation

2 Definitions

Research	A systematic activity leading to the creation of new knowledge or the use of existing knowledge in a novel and creative way in order to generate new concepts, understanding, and theories, but also methodologies, technologies, services, and products.
Code of conduct	A set of rules, values, and guidelines that outline the expected standards of behaviour within a community, workplace, or organisation, helping to create a respectful, safe, and fair environment by clearly defining what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is.
Research integrity	Adherence to professional values, principles, and best practices that, together, ensure and uphold the validity, social relevance, responsibility, and quality of research, entailing also freedom from all forms of harassment or coercion in the research process, as well as the active promotion of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
Gender equality plan	A structured strategy that promotes gender balance, eliminate barriers to equal participation, and integrate gender perspectives into research and innovation activities.
Gender dimension in research	Accounting for the potential influence of gender-related physical differences or differences in gender patterns at all stages of research projects. Where relevant, the diversity of users of the research results in terms of age, ethnicity, or health status should also be considered to maximise the utility of the results.
Open Science	A modern approach to research that emphasises transparency and accessibility, promotes collaboration, reproducibility, and dissemination, and thus makes research outcomes more trustworthy and impactful to society. A set of principles and practices that aim to make scientific research from all fields accessible to everyone, benefiting both scientists and society.
Science for policy	Activities promoting a dialogue between researchers and policymakers, the aim of which is a responsible research that supports policymakers in navigating the challenges of addressing societal issues.
Artificial intelligence (AI)	In the broadest sense, AI is a technology capable of simulating human intelligence to perform complex tasks, such as reasoning, learning, comprehension, problem-solving, or decision-making.
Research security	Research security refers to the safeguarding of scientific activities and outputs against theft, misuse, inappropriate exploitation, and undue influence by third countries or non-state actors.
Sustainability in research	Environmental, social, and economic perspective on research, without compromising scientific excellence or research freedom.
Research ethics	Primarily concerns handling and protection of human-related research data, including obligations on researchers to provide research subjects with detailed information about how their personal data will be used. Indirectly

also encompass the creation of appropriate working conditions and practices, as well as career support in research and talent development.

3 Executive Summary

KreativEU is an alliance of 11 European universities, associated with the common goal of establishing a fully European University that places the creative potential derived from Europe's cultural heritage at the heart of its teaching, research, and knowledge transfer activities. The objective of this document, which constitutes a deliverable within the framework of WP3 KreativEU Research work package, is to outline guidelines and recommendations for good research practice as a prerequisite for excellent research conducted at the KreativEU partner universities. Once specific KreativEU Transnational Working Groups are established later in the project, each will develop its detailed study methodology and protocol, adhering to its respective subject norms and processes while respecting the guidelines and recommendations outlined in this document.

Whereas a plan for conducting research work in KreativEU is outlined in the Joint Thematic Strategy of the KreativEU Alliance document, this document establishes alliance-wide standards for conducting this work, developing topics such as research integrity, gender issues, open science (including the operation and use of FAIR and trusted repositories), science for policy, the responsible use of generative AI in research, research security, and research ethics. Additionally, it emphasises and covers fundamental research-related documents at individual partner universities, such as the Code of Conduct, the Gender Equality Plan, and possibly other relevant documents, in part or in full, covering the above-listed topics. Where adequate, this document is related to other KreativEU documents, such as the Data Protection Plan (D1.5), the Diversity and Inclusion Plan (D1.7), the Sustainable Mobility Plan (D7.1), the Internationalisation Plan (D8.3), the WP5 White Paper "Creating a mutually reinforcing relationship between ethical/sustainable AI and Europe's cultural heritage" or KreativEU Seed Funding Initiative- Regulation (D6.2).

This document was collaboratively developed by the WP3 Team, led by the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice and the Opole University of Technology, with contributions from all KreativEU partners. As research is conducted at all KreativEU partner universities, and research results are presented and utilised in various research-related activities organised by the KreativEU Alliance and shared by its members, ensuring a level of excellence in those results is a must. A necessary minimum, in this respect, is to follow commonly accepted guidelines and recommendations on good research practice that, where possible, stem from documents approved at the EU level. The impact and potential of this deliverable are thus twofold: to sign up to such guidelines and recommendations within the KreativEU Alliance, thereby demonstrating a commitment to conducting trustworthy, ethical, and impactful research, and to serve as a possible example for other EU university or research alliances and consortia.

In line with the KreativEU Alliance's long-term vision and reflecting the steady development of good research standards, this document will be continuously reviewed and updated to address any concerns and necessary changes that may arise when conducting research at the KreativEU partner universities, as well as any new trends within the European research environment.

4 D3.1 KreativEU Study Methodology and Protocol

Introduction

The KreativEU Alliance

The eleven Universities forming the KreativEU Alliance agreed to the common goal of establishing a fully European University, which places the creative potential derived from Europe's cultural heritage at the heart of its teaching, research and knowledge transfer activities.

Committing to long-term institutional, structural, and strategic cooperation, the KreativEU partners will jointly implement an ambitious yet inclusive vision for transforming the study of culture, identity, memory, and heritage for the benefit of society.

Building on this strong foundation, KreativEU Alliance will provide innovative concepts, methods, and solutions to address current and future challenges, contributing to a sustainable, harmonious future for communities and the environment alike.

KreativEU Alliance recognises the inseparable interconnection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, as well as the interwoven nature of local and national traditions, crafts, cultural practices, and folklore.

The Alliance is dedicated to formulating cutting-edge educational and research programmes that re-evaluate these elements and their associated ecological surroundings, the lived environment, especially in the context of the digital age. This ecocultural vision serves as the foundational principle guiding KreativEU Alliance's efforts, ensuring that a new generation of EU citizens, working together across cultures, borders, languages, sectors, and disciplines, will be educated. Students from the KreativEU Alliance are expected to be leaders of change and enablers of societal transformation.

To reach this vision, the KreativEU Alliance will work towards the completion of 8 work packages (WP1 – Governance and Management; WP2 – KreativEU Education; WP3 – KreativEU Research; WP4 – KreativEU Culture with and for Society; WP5 – KreativEU Knowledge-Creation and Design Network on Smart Sustainability; WP6 – KreativEU Heritage European Campus; WP7 – KreativEU Mobility; WP8 – Communication and Dissemination).

Aim and Scope of the Deliverable

Although one of the KreativEU project work packages is Research, the project itself is not a research project. While it can provide resources to fund some research-related activities (e.g., covering travel costs for conferences or participation in workshops, and helping to develop and contribute to research-led infrastructures, such as running a journal and supporting open science practices), it does not (since it cannot) directly support research itself. Regardless, all alliance members are engaged in day-to-day research activities.

As depicted in the Description of Action (DoA), the aim of WP3 is “to promote a high quality and transnational research-based environment by investing attention on local, regional and national ecocultural identities, heritage, traditions, architecture, crafts, folklore, and cultural landscape, in order to contribute to the establishment of a European University unique in its kind, capable of offering a competitive and attractive European Research System.” Moreover, researchers at partner universities with research agendas related to cultural heritage will serve as a valuable resource for their students, providing a trove of topics, supervisors, and educators. Those students will also be trained in research-related issues, such as open science, as they will be expected to publish their research and deposit their research outcomes in open repositories. They will be required to adhere to the highest standards of research ethics and integrity, and to use AI responsibly in their research activities. The same applies to their supervisors or mentors.

All this has motivated the preparation of the current document, which establishes good research practices across the KreativEU Alliance and serves as a standard in any field of science. Therefore, the goal of this material is to outline fundamental guidelines and recommendations for coordinating and producing research-based materials within the KreativEU Alliance member universities. As is aptly and briefly stated in the DoA, “all the KreativEU partners will participate in the implementation of the thematic agenda according to established common ethical principles.”

The research-related activities that the KreativEU project will follow also permeate some other work packages. So, although research as such is not supported by the KreativEU project, many activities that are already supported or will be supported have close ties to it. Therefore, a decision has been made to issue the KreativEU Study Methodology and Protocol as a document guiding good research practice across all 11 partner universities, in line with the highest standards for research in the European research area. Where possible, this document links the specific topics discussed below to the existing European policy documents.

Chapter 1: Code of Conduct

A code of conduct is a set of rules, values, and guidelines that outline the expected standards of behaviour within a community, workplace, or organisation. It helps create a respectful, safe, and fair environment by clearly defining what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is. Having a code of conduct is important because it promotes professionalism, accountability, and integrity among members, ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and equality. It also helps prevent conflicts, discrimination, and misconduct by setting clear boundaries and consequences. Ultimately, a strong code of conduct builds trust, strengthens relationships, and supports a positive culture where people can work together effectively and ethically.

At universities, a code of conduct plays a particularly critical role in guiding ethical behaviour. It aims to ensure that research is conducted with honesty, integrity, and respect for all participants, colleagues, and the broader community. This includes being truthful in data collection and reporting, giving proper credit through citations and authorship, maintaining confidentiality, and avoiding practices such as plagiarism, data fabrication, fallacy propagation, or falsification. It also involves respecting the rights and dignity of human or animal research subjects, following safety protocols, and complying with legal and institutional regulations.

Equally important is the responsibility to respect human rights and show fairness and dignity to every individual involved in or affected by the research. Within the organisation, this means treating colleagues with respect regardless of race, religion, gender, position, or background. A code of conduct emphasises inclusivity, equity, and diversity, ensuring that no one is discriminated against or marginalised. By fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and safe, research teams can collaborate more effectively and deliver a wider range of ideas. A strong code of conduct thus not only safeguards the credibility of scientific findings but also strengthens trust, protects human dignity, and promotes a culture of integrity in which collaboration and innovation can thrive.

Responsibility to respect national rights and nature protection, and the commitment to documents that regulate the export of materials (e.g., Nagoya Protocol and CITES) are also undisputable.

KreativEU Commitment

Each of the 11 partner universities forming the KreativEU Alliance commits to the principles enshrined in the European Charter for Researchers, a set of general principles and requirements that specify the responsibilities and rights of researchers and students. An integral part of research is adherence to the highest standards of research work, both in the preparation and implementation of the research and in subsequent scientific communication. The basic ethical requirements for creative activity are outlined in the individual alliance members' Codes of Conduct, listed in the Appendix to this text. All KreativEU Alliance members also identify with the rules and principles outlined in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, as further elaborated in the next chapter section. Any allegations of misconduct will be handled in accordance with ENRIO-compatible procedures, ensuring fairness, confidentiality, thorough documentation, and cross-border coordination where necessary.

Further Resources

Allea: The European Federation of Academies of Science and Humanities. The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity – Revised Edition 2023. June 2023. 12 November 2025

<https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/>

European Commission. The European Charter for Researchers. 18 December 2023. 12 November 2025

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/hrexcellenceaward/european-charter-researchers>

ENERI: The European Network of Research Ethics and Research Integrity (ENRIO Handbook). N/A. 12 November 2025

<https://www.enrio.eu/first-publication-from-enrio-recommendations-for-the-investigation-of-research-misconduct/>

Links to the Codes of Conduct of the KreativEU Alliance members are provided in the Appendix.

Chapter 2: Research Integrity

Research integrity is the foundation of all research, providing the basis for collaboration in a fair, innovative, open, reliable, and trusted environment. It is adherence to professional values, principles, and best practices that, together, ensure and uphold the validity, social relevance, responsibility, and quality of research. Research integrity also entails freedom from all forms of harassment or coercion in the research process, as well as the active promotion of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Facing a decrease in trust in research, sometimes triggered by researchers themselves and their ways of conducting, polarisation of society, and related hate speech, even the world of science and scientists themselves are being targeted and threatened for conducting research, not surprisingly, mostly online. Research integrity, a virtue any researcher should protect, is one of the few weapons one has against allegations, and everyone should learn to handle it effectively.

The KreativEU Alliance is committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity in all aspects of its research activities and expects all individuals involved in these activities to make the same commitment. Adherence to these standards is essential to ensure the highest quality and excellence of science and research at the KreativEU Alliance member institutions. Likewise, it is essential to ensure the confidence of other scientists, as well as the public, in our science, our scientists, our research institutions, and the scientific community, and in science and research as a shared human endeavour, ensuring knowledge, prospects, and human well-being.

Recognising this commitment, the KreativEU Alliance subscribes to the principles of research integrity as articulated in The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, that describes professional, legal, societal, ethical, and moral responsibilities of the different actors in different settings, including those who define and implement the priorities and criteria for research funding, assessment, and publication, including formulation of the key basic principles for good practice in research:

- **reliability** in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in the design, methodology, analysis, and use of resources,
- **honesty** in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting, and communicating research in a transparent, fair, full, and unbiased way,
- **respect** for colleagues, research participants, research subjects, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage, the interests of other countries and the environment.
- **accountability** for all research-related activities, from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision, and mentoring, and for its wider societal impacts.

Fully transparent and reciprocal sharing of the methods, data, and outcomes of unclassified research – while maintaining confidentiality when appropriate – is crucial to research collaboration, integrity, and the free flow of ideas and information. Transparency in disclosing researcher affiliations, competing or conflicting interests, and funding sources is also important to ensure the integrity of the research. Transparency requires honesty. As a complementary value, honesty entails being straightforward and free of fraud and deception when proposing, developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting, and communicating research. This extends to all aspects of research, including

acknowledging the work of others and making justifiable claims or sensible interpretations based on research findings.

The following is just an excerpt of good research practices given in The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (this document also provides a list of ways that can lead to research misconduct and other unacceptable practices, along with guidance on how to address them):

- Researchers across the entire career path [...] undertake training in research ethics [more on research ethics below] and research integrity.
- Researchers report their results and methods, including the use of external services or AI and automated tools, in a way that is compatible with the accepted norms of the discipline and facilitates verification or replication, where applicable.
- Researchers handle research participants and subjects (be they human, animal, cultural, biological, environmental, or physical) and related data with respect and care, and in accordance with legal provisions and ethical principles.
- Researchers, research institutions, and organisations ensure that access to data is as open as possible, as closed as necessary, and where appropriate, in line with the FAIR Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) for data management.
- All partners in research collaborations take responsibility for the integrity of the research and its results.
- Researchers, research institutions, and organisations review and assess submissions for publication, funding, appointment, promotion, or reward in a transparent and justifiable manner, and disclose the use of AI and automated tools.
- Senior researchers, research leaders, and supervisors mentor their team members, led by example, and offer specific guidance and training to properly develop and structure their research activities.

The primary responsibility for the integrity of research lies with the researchers themselves. In doing so, researchers should be supported by an institutional culture of research integrity and by professional guidance grounded in the exchange of best practices. The values of research integrity are especially important when researchers act as supervisors.

Research integrity is crucial to preserving the trustworthiness of the research system and its results. Research stands on and draws from the work of the community of researchers and should be developed independently of any pressure from funding bodies and from ideological, economic, or political interests. Research integrity is thus intimately related to research security (see below), as breaching one usually entails breaching the other as well.

KreativEU Commitment

Each of the 11 European universities forming the KreativEU Alliance is committed to upholding the highest standards of research integrity. Moreover, all members of the KreativEU Alliance agree that anonymised summaries of research integrity breaches and lessons learned from them are shared

across the alliance. Each alliance partner, at the same time, assures that proper measures are implemented in cases of scientific misconduct, whistleblowing, and the protection of whistleblowers.

The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity is currently the generally accepted set of guidelines in this respect. Institutions commonly issue their own guidelines, as sometimes do also authorities at the national level. For example, in Germany, the DFG Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice have been published. Respective documents hardly ever diverge one from the other or are even in a conflict; rather, some may be more detailed than the others, with all following the same general principles. KreativEU, as a European university alliance, should nonetheless commit to The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity in the first place, while obeying national and institutional guidelines where appropriate.

Further Resources

Allea: The European Federation of Academies of Science and Humanities. The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity – Revised Edition 2023. June 2023. 12 November 2025
<https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/>

ICAI: International Center for Academic Integrity. The fundamental values of academic integrity. Third Edition. 2021. 12 November 2025
<https://academicintegrity.org/aws/ICAI/pt/sp/values>

LERU: League of European Research Universities. Towards a Research Integrity Culture at Universities: From Recommendations to Implementation (Advice Paper No. 26). January 2020. 12 November 2025.
<https://www.leru.org/files/Towards-a-Research-Integrity-Culture-at-Universities-full-paper.pdf>

Links to the KreativEU Alliance members' document on good research practice, if available, are provided in the Appendix.

Chapter 3: Gender Issues

Gender Equality Plan

A Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a structured strategy that promotes gender balance, eliminate barriers to equal participation, and integrate gender perspectives into research and innovation activities. It typically includes measures such as improving recruitment and career progression for women, ensuring balanced representation in leadership and decision-making roles, providing gender-awareness training, and addressing issues such as work-life balance and unconscious bias. A GEP is not just a policy document, but a practical tool that helps institutions build a more inclusive and equitable working environment where talent can thrive, regardless of gender.

Within the context of the Horizon Europe programme, having a GEP is a key requirement for many project calls. The European Commission emphasises gender equality as both a fundamental value and a driver of research excellence. By requiring GEPs, Horizon Europe ensures that funded projects integrate diversity and inclusivity at every stage, from team composition to research design and implementation. Also, thanks to this, every KreativEU Alliance partner has its own GEP ready; see the Appendix for links to individual plans.

Gender and Diversity Dimension in Research

Research and innovation have a significant impact on society and the quality of human life. However, they do not always bring the same benefits to different groups in society. Considering the gender dimension in research and innovation means accounting for the potential influence of gender-related physical differences or differences in gender patterns at all stages of research projects. Where relevant, the diversity of users of the research results in terms of age, ethnicity, or health status should also be considered to maximise the utility of the results.

A proposal for a research project should properly assess whether it is relevant to consider the possible role of gender or any other diversity factor in addressing the problem. If it is assumed relevant, the proposal should outline how the gender or diversity dimension will be considered in the different phases of the research. Taking a gender or other diversity perspective into account may not be appropriate for every project. Even if gender or other diversity dimensions might play no or only a marginal role in the proposed project, this position must be supported by sound arguments in the project proposal. It is always important to ask whether gender/diversity-blind research questions, methodologies, and approaches hinder the pursuit of new knowledge or a better quality of life.

In principle, an assessment of the possible role of gender and diversity in research is always meaningful if people are the objects or subjects of the research, users of the research results, or potentially affected by the results. In such cases, it is necessary to consider whether anatomical or physiological differences between sexes may play a role in the issue being addressed, whether there are differences in the needs of different gender groups, or whether different gender groups may have different expectations for the research results. It is also important to consider whether the chosen research methodology will lead to certain groups being excluded from using the solutions obtained.

The integration of the gender dimension in research is mandatory for proposals for research and innovation actions in Horizon Europe and is likely to become mandatory soon, if not already done, for proposals under national science foundation schemes.

KreativEU Commitment

Each of the 11 European universities forming the KreativEU Alliance is committed to refraining from any treatment of individuals based on gender and other diversity dimensions, and agrees to account for the gender dimension in research and innovation in all relevant actions. The topic of equal treatment based on gender is not specific to research and certainly is not the only aspect of equality to be respected. Each of the 11 European universities also shares a commitment to building an alliance in which everyone, regardless of background or ability, is welcomed, respected, and able to thrive. It thus ensures equal opportunities, fosters a sense of belonging, and values everyone's unique contribution, as explicitly stated in the KreativEU Diversity and Inclusion Plan (D1.7).

Further Resources

Gender Equality. Web page. 15 November 2025

<https://euricse.eu/en/gender-equality-plan/>

Gender in EU Research and Innovation. Web page. 15 November 2025

https://rea.ec.europa.eu/gender-eu-research-and-innovation_en

Trine Rogg Korsvik & Linda M. Rustad: What is the gender dimension in research? Case studies in interdisciplinary research. 2018. 15 November 2025

https://kjonnsforskning.no/sites/default/files/what_is_the_gender_dimension_roggkorsvik_kilden_genderresearch.no_.pdf

Gendered Innovations. Web page. 15 November 2025

<https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/index.html>

Gendered Innovations 2: How Inclusive Analysis Contributes to Research and Innovation. July 2020. 15 November 2025

<https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/GI%20%20How%20Inclusive%20Analysis%20Contributes%20to%20R&I.pdf>

Webinar. Web page. 15 November 2025

<https://researcheracademy.elsevier.com/research-preparation/research-design/integrate-sex-gender-intersectional-analysis-research>

Links to the Gender Equality Plans of the KreativEU Alliance members are provided in the Appendix.

Chapter 4: Open Science

Open Science is a modern approach to research that emphasises transparency and accessibility, promotes collaboration, reproducibility, and dissemination, and thus makes research outcomes more trustworthy and impactful to society. The KreativEU Alliance recognises Open Science as a core element of modern, responsible, and trustworthy research, and therefore as a fundamental component of its research strategy.

Open Science is a set of principles and practices that aim to make scientific research from all fields accessible to everyone, benefiting both scientists and society. It is about ensuring not only that scientific knowledge is accessible, but also that the process of producing that knowledge is inclusive, equitable, and sustainable. Access to scientific knowledge and process should be as open as possible; however, access may need to be restricted at times, for example, to protect human rights, confidentiality, intellectual property rights, personal information, threatened or endangered species, and sacred and secret indigenous knowledge.

Adopting the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, 193 countries have agreed to follow six guiding principles:

- 1. Transparency, scrutiny, critique, and reproducibility**—to reinforce the rigour of scientific results, enhance the positive impact of science on society, and increase society's ability to solve complex interconnected problems.
- 2. Equality of opportunities**—to ensure that all scientists and those with an interest in science have equal opportunity to access, contribute to and benefit from science, regardless of origin or circumstance.
- 3. Responsibility, respect, and accountability**—to be responsible for and aware of public accountability, potential conflicts of interest, intellectual integrity, and the possible social or ecological consequences of research activities.
- 4. Collaboration, participation, and inclusion**—to ensure that scientific collaborations transcend the boundaries of geography, language, and resources, and include knowledge from marginalised communities to solve problems of great social importance.
- 5. Flexibility**—to acknowledge that there is no one-size-fits-all way to practice open science and to encourage different pathways to practising it while upholding the core values.
- 6. Sustainability**—to be as efficient and impactful as possible by building on long-term practices, services, infrastructures, and funding models to ensure participation of scientists from less-privileged countries or institutions.

Open access to scientific publications, research data, and the accompanying metadata through publicly available repositories or open-access scientific journals is a well-established aspect of Open Science. This may not be so regarding citizen or participatory science. Participatory science, also known as citizen science, involves citizens and communities in the generation of knowledge, fostering enhanced dialogue among scientists, policymakers, practitioners, entrepreneurs, and community members. This approach provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to influence research in ways that align with their needs and expectations.

Open Science is also a topic of Pillar 1 of the European Charter for Researchers, emphasising researchers' engagement in its activities on the one hand and employers' commitment to provide training, tools, and infrastructure, as well as to reward researchers' engagement on the other hand.

KreativEU Commitment

All KreativEU Alliance members will strive to publish their research outputs in an open-access model, with data made publicly accessible via institutional or general repositories, and to adhere to FAIR and metadata standards, unless their privacy or sensitivity precludes it (the principle "as open as possible, as closed as necessary"). For the scientific articles, an open-access e-journal, Science, Heritage & Technology, is being established under the alliance, making scientific knowledge openly available to a wider society.

The open access repository will be developed to contain all doctoral theses/dissertations produced under joint supervision (deliverable D2.12). Bachelor's and master's theses will be included, subject to supervisors' confirmation of the quality of the work. The database will be hosted on the KreativEU digital infrastructure, provided by WP6, and will also be accessible to the broader scientific community via scientific search engines (e.g., BASE) and to the public via a link on the KreativEU website.

Further Resources

UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science. 21 September 2023. 15 November 2025

<https://www.unesco.org/en/open-science/about>

European Open Science Cloud (EOSC). Web page. 15 November 2025

<https://eosc.eu/>

https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/our-digital-future/open-science/european-open-science-cloud-eosc_en

FAIR Principles. Web page. 15 November 2025

<https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles>

CoreTrustSeal: Trustworthy Data Repositories Requirements. 2020–2022. 15 November 2025

<https://www.coretrustseal.org/why-certification/requirements/>

Wilkinson, M., Dumontier, M., Aalbersberg, I. *et al.* (2016) The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship. *Sci Data*, 3, 160018.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/sdata201618>

Chapter 5: Science for Policy

Today's world faces enormous challenges—climate change, biodiversity loss, ageing populations, pandemics, and the rapid rise of artificial intelligence. In the face of these issues, the value of scientific research in helping decision-makers choose the right path has never been greater. Policies are stronger and more effective when they are based on solid evidence and informed by scientific research. But this process must work both ways: researchers need to understand policymakers' priorities and realities, while policymakers need to draw on the knowledge and innovation that science provides. This two-way exchange not only makes decisions more relevant and impactful, but it also helps build trust in science, which is essential for society to adopt change and collaborate on solutions to its most pressing problems.

Scientific research should support policymakers in navigating the challenges of addressing societal issues. Decision-makers face complex, knowledge-intensive challenges for which simple solutions do not exist. Science can provide rigorous evidence of the challenges that they want to and must address, enabling a better understanding of the problem and assessment of the likely implications of available options. This type of science-based contribution can improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of policymaking. This is the case for all policy challenges, but is particularly important for tackling complex, knowledge-demanding challenges, such as those defined by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, helping to assess the potential actions to be taken.

While all scientific knowledge is relevant, policy needs are specific and differ from purely curiosity-driven or industrial/market-oriented research. Aligning research agendas with policy needs aims to enhance the collective understanding of societal challenges and evaluate available policy options. For this purpose, Science for Policy aims to identify relevant policy challenges, compile and synthesise research findings, turning them into actionable knowledge for policy purposes. In the other direction, public policy also shapes and/or orients research activities through thematic calls, the co-design of research programs, support for research infrastructures, and educational programs. These examples show the bidirectional relationship between policy and research.

Science for Policy activities aim to promote the research–policy dialogue. These interactions should aim to build trust among decision-makers, researchers, experts, and societal actors (stakeholders, civil society organisations, and citizens) who are dealing with societal challenges. Specifically, they should include, but not be limited to, the following actions:

- Identify policy-relevant research questions, co-designed with policy organisations.
- Present usable synthesis of research findings (briefings, reports, policy-oriented studies).
- Organise research–policy events (workshops, seminars, conferences) to exchange scientific results and policy priorities, aligning policy and research agendas.
- Co-design policy-oriented research programmes and funding instruments.
- Offer training and exchange programmes to facilitate the interaction between policy and research experts.

To support sustained interaction between research and policymaking, the Alliance will encourage its relevant structures (e.g. thematic working groups and governance bodies) to maintain a transparent record of policy-engagement activities, including requests for expert input, meetings with public

authorities, hearings, and citations of KreativEU work in strategies and policy documents. Where appropriate, these activities will result in concise policy briefs that provide plain-language summaries of the underlying evidence, clarify the limits of current knowledge, and explicitly communicate uncertainties.

Policymakers receive input from various sources, not only scientific research. Scientific, evidence-based knowledge is one of many sources, including values, opportunities, feasibility, and acceptability. Importantly, however, scientific and evidence-based knowledge plays a critical role in providing factual statements of the challenges at hand and the implications of different options/choices. Therefore, scientific knowledge can improve the quality, efficiency, and even direction of policymaking. Moreover, science-informed, evidence-based policymaking requires interdisciplinary and systemic approaches to understand complex challenges, assess options, overcome personal biases, and ultimately improve how societal challenges are addressed. For these reasons, Science for Policy activities should always be viewed as a collective process aimed at mobilising knowledge to address societal challenges. When providing scientific and evidence-based contributions, the expert panels should ensure the highest scientific quality, research integrity, and transparency. The review of scientific evidence should highlight how findings were gathered and the resources and tools used, and discuss the system boundaries and points of uncertainty. This rule, generally accepted in science, here takes the form of recommendations that are politically and personally unaffected and that transgress any current governing bodies.

Transparency requires addressing the uncertainties of scientific evidence and methodological constraints, discussing system boundaries in the analysis, and communicating uncertainties. These activities should present scientific, evidence-based options rather than prescriptive recommendations. These options should always be provided by panels of experts, rather than single researchers. Science for Policy activities do not aim to develop new scientific knowledge, but rather to gather existing knowledge. The objective is to mobilise collective understanding within scientific communities to navigate complex societal challenges.

KreativEU Commitment

Each of the 11 European universities forming the KreativEU Alliance agrees that it is necessary to provide politicians with evidence-based recommendations and, where possible, actively influence policy, while respecting the highest standards of research ethics and integrity to ensure that science retains its trustworthiness. Given this, it is also important to recognise that not all scientific research needs to be policy-relevant.

Further Resources

Guidance on Science for Policy Activities. 4 April 2024. 15 November 2025

<https://scienceeurope.org/our-resources/guidance-science-for-policy/>

[Evidence-Informed Policy Making](#)

Better Regulation Guidelines (European Commission)

[Planning and proposing law - European Commission](#)

Chapter 6: Responsible Use of AI in Research

In an era of rapid technological development and ever-expanding Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities, it is crucial to strike a balance between AI's potential to enhance research and the need to safeguard sensitive data and maintain academic integrity. All AI tools should be used in accordance with the ethical principles of each institution, as defined in its Code of Conduct. This is especially true for generative AI (genAI), which can generate original content, such as text, images, audio, video, data, or computer code, in response to user queries.

As in many other applications, genAI is also omniscient in research. A recent survey by Wiley (the reference is provided below) reports that 84% of researchers use AI tools in their work, with 62% utilising AI for research and/or publication-related tasks. This includes writing assistance, monitoring, analysing, and summarising large amounts of information, generating recommendations, making papers (look) more ambitious and impactful, or offloading essential but less engaging work. Sixty-three per cent of researchers are interested in using AI in the latter case, including handling administrative tasks, writing documentation, populating citations, and even assisting with writing funding applications. Moreover, 55% of researchers are interested in using AI to support their peer review tasks. Hopefully, a vision that AI will produce scientific papers and project proposals, which another AI will review and still another will publish, on which the first one will learn, will hopefully stay in the world of sci-fi. Yet given a rather competitive than cooperative research environment where "only those that run stay in the same place", referring to the Red Queen Hypothesis in evolution, one cannot be sure of that.

The use of genAI in research also carries epistemic risks when trusted as a knowledge-production partner without further fact-checking. GenAI models, and hence the decisions made from these models, are only as good as the data that supports them. This may be a problem for both small and large research fields, for various reasons. And, where controversies exist, the tools cannot assign different values to different opinions. Hence, overreliance on AI raises several concerns about its implications for scientific creativity, credibility, research integrity, and, more fundamentally, the nature of scientific understanding. Other risks for research in Europe could stem from the proprietary nature of some tools, the concentration of ownership, or the undesirable transfer of critical technology and intellectual property; just recall the third item in the list below.

The emergence and diffusion of AI and machine learning pose new questions: these technologies can significantly facilitate the summary and review of large bodies of (scientific) contributions for policy purposes. However, ensuring the quality, rigour, and reliability of these automated summaries remains an open question. While the debate on AI-related impact is still at an early stage, its implications on Science for Policy activities already pose major challenges.

AI is intimately related to research ethics and integrity. It then comes as no surprise that the four key values discussed above with respect to research ethics and integrity (reliability, honesty, respect, accountability) also extend to the AI world. Many guidelines on the responsible use of (generative) AI in research have been developed, all offering recommendations to support appropriate use and ensure that genAI plays a positive role in research practices. Safe, efficient and trustworthy use and individual author's responsibility are the cornerstones of any such guidelines. Specifically, the

European Commission's Living Guidelines on the Responsible Use of Generative AI in Research (link provided below) offer six fundamental recommendations for individual researchers:

1. Remain responsible for the research output. For example, avoid fabricating or falsifying data, be aware of genAI limitations, and never use genAI output as is. Be aware of biases, check citations carefully, and interpretability is what makes you a researcher. Verify all AI outputs (AI tools may hallucinate, make mistakes, or provide false or biased information); responsibility remains on you. Use AI as a supporting tool, not as a substitute for creative activities such as the formulation of my own statements, conclusions, arguments, interpretations, etc.

2. Use genAI transparently. Avoid plagiarism, confess substantial use of genAI, for text creation, coding, data processing, calculations, image creation, etc. Nothing strikes like a perfect introduction followed by a below-average text in the following sections. You can neither use AI as a co-author, nor can you claim yourself an author of texts or other creative outputs generated by AI. The only generally agreed case where AI need not be confessed, is improvement of stylistic text quality and grammar corrections (form of the text, not its creation).

3. Beware of sharing sensitive or protected information with AI tools. Uploaded input may be used for other purposes, by whoever the end party can be, in addition to being used for further training, and you lose control over them. Protected includes unpublished as well as patented, or licensed data, research datasets, project proposals, etc., sensitive includes personal data, esp. of third parties without their consent.

4. Respect national, EU, and international legislation. Use of genAI-generated output can bear marks of plagiarism. It's much like using text from papers without referencing them. Be especially alert if the generated output contains personal data. Do not use AI to create and disseminate false information.

5. Engage in continuous training in proper and sustainable use of genAI tools. Stay up to date with the best and safest practices and share them with the research community. Be aware of the non-negligible carbon footprint that the use of AI may produce.

6. Refrain from inadequate use of genAI in evaluation, assessment, and other activities that may impact others. Honesty and respect are the major ethical values applicable here. Show respect by conducting those activities yourselves (you can still use genAI to generate some background information, but the final decision and the underlying arguments are yours).

Universities should play an active role in obeying these commitments, directly or indirectly. This can be achieved by providing or allowing researchers with adequate training on ethically, responsibly and sustainably using genAI, creating an atmosphere of trust where researchers disclosing the use of AI are not penalized (but those not disclosing penalized), encouraging researchers to share and discuss their positive use of genAI, keeping institution-wide recommendations up-to-date, ensuring appropriate level of cybersecurity, survey researchers' needs regarding use of genAI with sensitive/unpublished data.

KreativEU Commitment

A white paper exploring how AI, sustainability, and European cultural heritage can be meaningfully connected to shape a shared and responsible future, entitled “Creating a mutually reinforcing relationship between ethical/sustainable AI and Europe’s cultural heritage”, has been produced by KreativEU WP5, aiming to establish a shared conceptual foundation of this issue. Each of the 11 European universities forming the KreativEU Alliance agrees that only the ethical, safe, and open use of AI, combined with critical thinking and fact-checking, can lead to sustainable, trustworthy research. To help with this, WP2 will launch a Centre for Excellence in Digital Education and AI, aimed at developing staff skills in digital and intercultural teaching.

Further Resources

Guidelines on the responsible use of generative AI in research, developed by the European Research Area Forum. April 2025. 15 November 2025

https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/guidelines-responsible-use-generative-ai-research-developed-european-research-area-forum-2024-03-20_en

ExplanAltions 2025: The evolution of AI in research. A Wiley survey on the use of AI by researchers. Web page. 15 November 2025

<https://www.wiley.com/en-ie/about-us/ai-resources/ai-study/key-findings/>

(see also <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-025-00343-5>)

Committee on Publication Ethics. Authorship and AI Tools: A COPE Position Statement. 2023. 15 November 2025

<https://publicationethics.org/guidance/cope-position/authorship-and-ai-tools>

[Creating a mutually reinforcing relationship between ethical/sustainable AI and Europe's cultural heritage](#). A white paper serving as a working document that describes and explains the reference points for the research, education and innovation activities undertaken within Work Package 5 (WP5) of the KreativEU project.

Chapter 7: Research Security

Research security refers to the safeguarding of scientific activities and outputs against theft, misuse, inappropriate exploitation, and undue influence by third countries or non-state actors. Acknowledging that open and international collaboration on research is indispensable for pushing knowledge boundaries and addressing complex societal challenges, there are circumstances in which it is justified to control access to research, infrastructure, or technology, and take seriously the risk that research partnerships and collaborations may lead to harmful or adverse outcomes.

In this light, it is essential to recognise that openness and security are not contradictory, but rather complementary and mutually reinforcing. Appropriate, risk-targeted research security measures can strengthen the foundations of academic freedom, **research integrity**, **open science**, and transparency. It is immensely important to maintain trust within research and in science from the public, which has been seriously shaken following the COVID-19 pandemic. **Responsible use of AI** is becoming another aspect of mitigating potential risks in this respect.

Academia is a large source of information, much of which is sensitive by itself or in aggregate, classified or regulated by the state or by a contractual relationship with a partner. What makes academic staff a target of foreign powers' interests far more often than you think is your access to processes, functions, and information that may represent a potential source of information for persons representing the interests of other states or non-state actors.

As global research collaboration expands, research security has emerged as a crucial aspect of protecting intellectual property, technological advancements, and academic integrity. Universities should establish robust feedback channels to ensure that security policies evolve in response to real-world challenges. The goal is to establish a proactive, integrated system that safeguards its research ecosystem while remaining open to global scientific collaboration. Security requirements should be proportionate to the risks.

Identifying and managing risks is key to reducing the risk of interference in the university sector (and elsewhere). The aim is then to apply risk management processes to reduce vulnerability to interference (and to mitigate such interference) in all university activities. In particular, the most attention should be focused on: Protecting intellectual property, research projects, and grants, their content and progress; Protecting the reputation of the HEI, members of the academic community, partners, and other stakeholders; Watching out for the risks that partners and external (off-budget) funding may present.

Research security embraces many issues, such as

- protection of sensitive data,
- protection of personal data,
- responsible and safe behaviour in contact with people and institutions from risk countries, both at home and when in such countries,
- external funding,
- research partnerships.

The following is a list of just a few general recommendations to consider:

- **Hosting students and academics from risk countries.** Some foreign states or groups use students, researchers, domestic citizens, and others to acquire sensitive and proprietary information, as well as pre-publication data and information, from researchers and research entities. Necessary physical access and security measures are essential to establish this, together with the identification of sensitive research groups, research topics, and laboratories.
- **Visits to institutions and conferences located in high-risk countries.** Examples abound with computers or mobile phones that were copied by local intelligence services.
- **Funding which comes from high-risk countries.** There is a risk of influencing the beneficiaries, which could subsequently violate research ethics and integrity principles.
- **Establishing spin-off companies with subjects linked to risk countries.** There is an obvious risk of intellectual property theft, as this commonly becomes one of the key assets and a primary reason for establishing such companies. This also relates to the potential for breaking export controls and sanctions.
- **Identifying dual-use applications.** This is not an easy task, as virtually everything can be misused today, yet each organisation needs to consider this seriously.
- **Cybersecurity.** Whether a host comes from a risk country or a student or researcher goes abroad, a potential breach of the university's computer network exists. High-level cybersecurity measures are therefore a must.
- **Partnerships and collaborations.** International science and research depend on domestic and international collaborations and partnerships with individuals and organisations within and outside of academia. While most partnerships are mutually beneficial and advance the reputation and standing of all parties involved, there are those who would exploit these collaborations to facilitate unauthorised access to research inputs, processes, or knowledge for undisclosed purposes. Proactive security measures are inevitable, including due diligence.

Setting up a system resilient to external influence and protecting our research is not easy and straightforward. It is about strategic planning. It is recommended to start with a policy document that declares the university's commitment to research security principles and defines a chain of reporting and resolving potential security incidents, followed by setting up a few simple implementation regulations, e.g., rules for travelling to the risk countries and for due diligence when asked for cooperation by potential partners from such countries. As experience builds, other regulations will follow.

KreativEU Commitment

All 11 KreativEU partners express a strong and shared commitment to research security (also known as trusted research, institutional resilience or responsible internationalisation), including performing visits to high-risk countries and hosting visitors (including students) from high-risk countries, protecting sensitive data, technologies, and intellectual property, and verifying any potential collaborators from high-risk countries via adequate due diligence. These guidelines also align with the KreativEU Internationalisation Plan (D8.3). It is also important that research security managers and/or

international offices at each alliance partner offer training on research security to raise awareness of all involved risks.

All KreativEU members also declare their willingness to inform their KreativEU partners of any potential research security incidents (with an appropriate level of openness) and to share good practices for mitigating risks in this domain. Standardised processes will be established so that all partners are aware of this point.

Further Resources

Counter Foreign Interference Manual for the Czech Academic Sector. N/A. 15 November 2025
<https://mv.gov.cz/chh/clanek/terorismus-web-aktuality-aktuality-protivlivovy-manual-pro-sektor-vysokych-skol.aspx>

From Awareness to Action: Research Security in Czech and European Academia. 1 May 2025. 15 November 2025
<https://chinaobservers.eu/from-awareness-to-action-research-security-in-czech-and-european-academia/>

UK National Protective Security Authority, Trusted Research. Web page. 15 November 2025
<https://www.npsa.gov.uk/specialised-guidance/trusted-research>

G7 Common Values and Principles on Research Security and Research Integrity. June 2022. 15 November 2025
<https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/safeguarding-your-research/general-information-research-security/international-research-security-resources/g7-common-values-and-principles-research-security-and-research-integrity>

Chapter 8: Sustainability in Research

Sustainability in research has three main elements: environmental, social, and economic. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Green Charter outlines guiding principles for promoting environmentally sustainable practices in all MSCA-funded research projects, encouraging researchers, managers, organisations and consortia to consider environmental impacts throughout each project's life cycle. It provides concrete guidance to help participants plan and implement their work sustainably, without compromising scientific excellence or research freedom, and requires them to explain their sustainability actions in both proposals and final reporting. To support the practical integration of these principles, the charter and its accompanying materials offer recommendations on the four principal pillars:

- travel, events, and meetings,
- research practices and resource-intensive research settings,
- data, hardware and software,
- green procurement, facilities and infrastructure.

Some specific measures that stem from these pillars and that individuals and institutions may consider are (but many more are provided in the MSCA Green Charter):

1. Reducing, reusing and recycling;
2. Offering sustainability training opportunities for staff;
3. Offering training on sustainable use of AI and data handling;
4. Promoting open science practices via access to sustainable computing infrastructure;
5. Promoting green purchasing for project-related materials;
6. Ensuring the sustainability of project events;
7. Using low-emission forms of transport;
8. Promoting teleconferencing whenever possible;
9. Procuring goods and services efficiently and upon justified demand;
10. Using sustainable and renewable forms of energy;
11. Developing awareness of environmental sustainability;
12. Sharing ideas and examples of best practice.

KreativEU Commitment

The KreativEU European University Alliance commits to implementing these MSCA Green Charter pillars across all research activities and encourages all researchers, from doctoral candidates to senior professors, to actively contribute to reducing the environmental impact of their work. By incorporating sustainability principles into all research activities, the KreativEU European University Alliance also commits to advancing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals while establishing a resilient, equitable, and environmentally responsible research system across all partner institutions. Green mobilities are a priority within the KreativEU Alliance, as set out in the KreativEU Sustainable Mobility Plan (D7.1).

Further Resources

MSCA Green Charter. 2025. 15 November 2025

<https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/about-msca/msca-green-charter>

Chapter 9: Research Ethics

While the ethical scientific principles also indirectly encompass the creation of appropriate working conditions and practices, as well as career support in research and talent development (Pillar 4 of the European Charter for Researchers), research ethics primarily concern the handling of human-related research data. Data protection imposes obligations on researchers to provide research subjects with detailed information about how their personal data will be used. It also requires those who process the data to ensure it is properly protected, minimised, and destroyed when no longer needed. If research involves processing any personal data, regardless of the method used, one must demonstrate compliance with both legal and ethical requirements.

All EU projects processing personal information about identifiable human research subjects are subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The principle of accountability is central to the GDPR and requires data processors to establish and document data protection compliance processes. It is the researchers' responsibility to ensure that the research complies with the data protection laws in all EU member states where their research data is processed, as well as with the GDPR and the KreativEU Data Protection Plan (D1.5).

All research proposals that involve the processing of personal data must include information on the data protection provisions. The researcher must ensure that these issues are duly included and addressed in the research protocol submitted to and approved by the research ethics committee that every institution working with human-related data should have.

One of the best ways to mitigate ethical concerns arising from the use of personal data is to anonymise it so that it no longer links to identifiable individuals. Data that no longer relate to identifiable persons, such as aggregate and statistical data, or data that have otherwise been rendered anonymous so that the data subject cannot be re-identified, are not personal data and are therefore outside the scope of data protection law. Still, one must specify the source of the datasets they intend to use in the proposal and address any ethical issues that arise. One must also consider the potential for misuse of the research methodology or findings, as well as the risk of harm to the group or community that the data concerns. Where it is necessary to retain a link between the research subjects and their personal data, one should pseudonymise the data to protect the data subject's privacy and minimise the risk to their fundamental rights in the event of unauthorised access. At the organisational level, the host institution must therefore ensure that it provides appropriate protection for the raw (personal) data.

In any case, the researcher should collect only the data necessary to meet research objectives. Data minimisation applies not only to the amount of personal data collected, but also to the extent to which it may be accessed, further processed, and/or shared, as well as the purposes for which it is used and the period for which it is kept.

Informed consent is the cornerstone of research ethics. It explains to research participants what the research is about, what their participation in the project entails, and any risks involved. Whenever personal data is collected directly from research participants, one must obtain their informed consent through a procedure that meets the GDPR's minimum standards. This requires consent to be given by a clear affirmative act establishing a freely given, specific, informed, and unambiguous indication of the subject's agreement to the processing of their personal data. As with any research project involving human subjects, if data processing entails potential risks to the data subjects' rights and

freedoms, they must be informed of these risks during the informed consent process. Research projects that involve collecting data from children require obtaining the consent of a parent/legal representative and, where appropriate, the child's assent. One must also apply the principle of protection by design to research data concerning children, minimising the collection and processing of their data as far as possible.

If researchers use publicly available data, they must provide details of the source(s) and confirm that the data are openly accessible and may be used for research purposes. They must also do this where the data they intend to use has been manifestly made public by the data subject. It is not enough that the data is accessible; it must have been made public to the extent that the data subjects have no reasonable expectation of privacy. Researchers must also ensure that their intended use of the data complies with any terms and conditions published by the data controller.

Sending participants' personal data to partners, collaborators, or service providers outside the EU raises ethical and legal issues that can be difficult to address in practice. Researchers based outside the EU may be subject to different ethical guidelines, and their data handling may not meet EU standards. The EU requires that its ethics standards apply to all research it funds, regardless of the country in which it is conducted. The transfer of personal data from non-EU countries is subject to strict data protection requirements. One must also ensure that the recipients of the data adhere to the same level of data protection as required under EU law.

Researchers may retain the personal data they collect only as long as it is necessary for the purposes for which it was collected, or in accordance with established auditing, archiving, or retention provisions for the project. These must be explained to the research participants in accordance with informed consent procedures. As soon as the research data is no longer needed or subject to an established retention period, it must be securely deleted in its entirety and ensured that it cannot be recovered. Data retained for auditing purposes should be stored securely and further processed solely for those purposes.

Beyond human-focused research, ethical scientific principles also extend to the treatment of animals. This means that any research involving animals must follow strict guidelines that minimise harm, reduce suffering, and promote humane care, while ensuring that such studies are scientifically justified and carried out only when no viable alternatives exist.

KreativEU Commitment

Each of the 11 European universities forming the KreativEU Alliance has established its own Institutional Committee on Research Ethics and designated Data Protection Officers. These bodies are responsible for ensuring that all research activities comply with the highest ethical standards, particularly when the work involves human participants, the processing of human-related data, or the use of sensitive materials. Their role is to safeguard the rights, dignity, and privacy of individuals, while also ensuring that research practices remain transparent, fair, and in line with both national and European regulations.

By embedding these ethical principles into their research frameworks, the KreativEU universities demonstrate their commitment not only to scientific excellence but also to social responsibility and

respect for fundamental values. In doing so, they ensure that innovation and discovery are aligned with integrity, accountability, and trustworthiness.

Further Resources

The Ethics and Data Protection Decision Tree. Web page. 15 November 2025

<https://ec.europa.eu/assets/rtd/ethics-data-protection-decision-tree/index.html>

European Commission: Ethics and Data Protection. 5 July 2021. 15 November 2025

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ethics-and-data-protection_he_en.pdf

European Commission. The European Charter for Researchers. 18 December 2023. 12 November 2025

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/hrexcellenceaward/european-charter-researchers>

Appendix

This Appendix provides an overview of the fundamental documents that individual KreativEU Alliance members possess to support their good research practice. These documents include codes of conduct for research integrity, gender equality plans, open science strategies, and related initiatives.

Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUas)

AI Strategy Compass at BUas

<https://www.buas.nl/en/about-us/artificial-intelligence/strategy-compass>

BUas Code of Conduct

[BUas-code-of-conduct.pdf](#)

BUas Diversity and Inclusion Plan

[Diversity and Inclusion | BUas.nl](#)

Dutch Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, by the Dutch Organisation for Scientific Research

[Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity | NWO](#)

Sustainability at BUas

<https://www.buas.nl/en/about-us/sustainability>

University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (USB)

USB Code of Conduct

https://www.jcu.cz/images/JCU-EN/university/university-bodies/ethics-committee/rectors-ordinance-no-432_stipulating-the-usb-code-of-conduct.pdf

Principles of Research Integrity at USB

<https://www.jcu.cz/en/science-and-research/research-ethics-and-integrity>

USB Gender Equality Plan 2025-2028

<https://www.jcu.cz/en/science-and-research/research-and-gender>

Strategy of Sustainability and Green Transformation

https://www.jcu.cz/images/UNIVERZITA/rozvoj/strategie-a-rozvoj/udrzitelnost-2024/dokumenty/english-strategie-udrzitelnosti-ju_25-30_fin.pdf

Trnava University in Trnava (TUT)

Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and Ethics in Slovakia (2025). Ministry of Education, Science, Research, and Sport of the Slovak Republic & Centre of Scientific and Technical Information of the Slovak Republic (CVTI SR).

<https://www.minedu.sk/kodex-vyskumnej-integrity-a-etiky-na-slovensku/>

Code of Research Integrity and Ethics at the University of Trnava in Trnava (2025). Regulation No. 12/2025. Trnava: University of Trnava.

Declaration on fostering the culture of scientific integrity in Slovakia (2021). Bratislava: Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (SCSTI). ISBN 978-80-89965-99-1.

https://eraportal.sk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/DECLARATION-on-Fostering-the-Culture-of-Scientific-Intergrity-in-Slovakia_web.pdf

Directive of the Rector of the University of Trnava in Trnava on observance of the principle of equal treatment and protection against manifestations of intolerance at Trnava university in Trnava (2025). Regulation No. 15/2025. Trnava: University of Trnava.

<https://www.truni.sk/sites/default/files/rektor/directive-of-the-rektor-of-trnava-university-in-trnava-observance-of-the-principle-of-equal-treatment-and-protection-against-manifestations-of-intolerance-at-trnava-university-in-trnava.pdf>

Directive of the Rector of the University of Trnava in Trnava on inclusion and equal opportunities at the university (2025). Regulation No. 13/2025. Trnava: University of Trnava.

<https://www.truni.sk/sites/default/files/rektor/directive-of-the-rektor-of-trnava-university-in-trnava-on-inclusion-and-equal-opportunities-at-university.pdf>

Directive of the Rector of Trnava University in Trnava (2015). Regulation No. 3/2015 – Ethical Code of Trnava University in Trnava. Trnava: University of Trnava.

https://www.truni.sk/sites/default/files/rektor/3_2015_eticky-kodex-tu-final-1.pdf

CODE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND ETHICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TRNAVA IN TRNAVA No. 12/2015

<https://www.truni.sk/sites/default/files/kodex-vyskumnej-integrity-a-etiky-tu.pdf>

University of Greifswald (UG)

Forschungsstrategie der Universität Greifswald 2024 / Research Strategy of the University of Greifswald 2024

- German version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/3_Forschung/3.1_Forschungsprofil/3.1.1_Forschungsschwerpunkte/3.1.1.1_Forschungsstrategie-2024/Forschungsstrategie-2024-Broschuere-A4-de-Webfassung.pdf/
- English version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/3_Forschung/3.1_Forschungsprofil/3.1.1_Forschungsschwerpunkte/3.1.1.1_Forschungsstrategie-2024/Research-Strategy-2024-Broschuere-A4-en-web.pdf

Grundsätze guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis / Principles of good research practice

- German version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/1_Universitaet/1.2_Organisation/1.2.5_Satzungen_und_Formulare/Satzungen/Mitwirkung_Gremien_Verfahren/Gwd.Grundsaeetze_guter_wissenschaftlicher_Praxis_16.06.2021.pdf

Satzung zu Errichtung und Verfahren einer „Kommission zur ethischen Beurteilung sicherheitsrelevanter Forschung“ an der Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald / Statute of the Establishment and Procedure of a “Committee for the Ethical Evaluation of Security-Relevant Research (KEF)”

- German version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/1_Universitaet/1.2_Organisation/1.2.5_Satzungen_und_Formulare/Satzungen/Mitwirkung_Gremien_Verfahren/KEF_Satzung.pdf

Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) auf Basis der “European Charter for Researchers” und des “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers” / Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) Based on the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”

- German version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/3_Forschung/3.4_Forschungsservice_und_praxis/3.4.5_Qualitaetsicherung/3.4.5.4_HRS4R/HR-Strategie_Universitaet_Greifswald.pdf
- English version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/3_Forschung/3.4_Forschungsservice_und_praxis/3.4.5_Qualitaetsicherung/3.4.5.4_HRS4R/HR-Strategy_University_of_Greifswald.pdf

Leitlinien zur Transparenz in der Forschung an der Universität Greifswald / Guidelines on Transparency in Research at the University of Greifswald

- German version: <https://www.uni-greifswald.de/index.php?eID=dumpFile&t=f&f=375255&token=52d34efac739f920d7777b368f7a8613ddea8d0c>

Erklärung zum Gender Equality Plan / Statement on the Gender Equality Plan

- German version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/3_Forschung/3.4_Forschungsservice_und_praxis/Erklaerung_GEP_Uni_Greifswald_unterschrieben_16022022.pdf
- English version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/3_Forschung/3.4_Forschungsservice_und_praxis/Erklaerung_GEP_Uni_Greifswald_unterschrieben_ENG.pdf

Erklärung zur Nutzung von KI an der Universität Greifswald / Statement on the use of AI at the University of Greifswald

- German version: https://www.uni-greifswald.de/storages/uni-greifswald/1_Universitaet/1.1_Information/1.1.1_Ueber_uns/grundsatzdokumente/nutzen-von-ki-an-der-ug-2023.pdf

The most relevant strategies and statements have been provided above. All Strategies, Principles and Statements of the University of Greifswald can be found on the website of the University of Greifswald

- German version: <https://www.uni-greifswald.de/universitaet/information/ueber-universitaet/strategien-der-universitaet/>

- English version: <https://www.uni-greifswald.de/en/universitaet/information/profile/the-universitys-strategies/>

Polytechnic University of Tomar (IPT)

IPT Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Plan 2025-2028:

<http://www.diversidadeinclusao.ipt.pt/downloads/Plano/equality-plan-ipt.pdf>

Ethics Committee Regulations:

<https://politecnicotomar.sharepoint.com/teams/WP3KreativEUAlliance/Documentos%20Partilhados/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fteams%2FWP3KreativEUAlliance%2FDocumentos%20Partilhados%2FGeneral%2FResearch%20protocol%20documents%2FIPT%2FEthics%20Comittee%20Regulations%2Epdf&parent=%2Fteams%2FWP3KreativEUAlliance%2FDocumentos%20Partilhados%2FGeneral%2FResearch%20protocol%20documents%2FIPT>

Opole University of Technology (OTech)

Polish Academy of Sciences (2024). *Code of Ethics of a Researcher*. Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences.

Opole University of Technology (2023). *Gender Equality Plan for Opole University of Technology*. Opole: Opole University of Technology. Appendix to Rector's Ordinance No. 6/2023 of Opole University of Technology
<https://po.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Plan-rownosci-plci-dla-Politechniki-Opolskiej.pdf>

Ministry of Science and Higher Education (2025). *Policy on Open Access to Research Data Funded from Public Funds*. Warsaw: Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University (ATU)

Higher Education Council Guidelines on Scientific Research and Ethics (National level)

<https://www.yok.gov.tr/documents/documents/68fb63b8b2511.pdf>

ATU barrier-free campus unit and directives

<https://eob.atu.edu.tr/#!/iletisim/0/>
<https://teams.microsoft.com/v2/>

ATU scientific research and publication ethics council and directives

<https://etikkurul.atu.edu.tr/#!/>

ATU Women Studies Research Center

<https://kam.atu.edu.tr/#!/>

Valahia University of Targoviste (VUT)

Ministry of Education and Research - National Research Authority of Romania (National level)

National Strategy for Research, Innovation and Smart Specialization 2022-2027

https://www.research.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/sncisi_19-iulie.pdf

<https://www.research.gov.ro/programe-nationale/strategia-nationala-de-cercetare-inovare-si-specializare-inteligenta-2022-2027/>

National Strategy in the Field of Artificial Intelligence 2024-2027

<https://www.research.gov.ro/programe-nationale/strategia-nationala-in-domeniul-inteligentei-artificiale-2024-2027/>

National Strategy in the Field of Quantum Technologies 2024-2029

<https://www.research.gov.ro/programe-nationale/strategia-nationala-in-domeniul-tehnologiilor-cuantice-2024-2029-2/>

National Research, Development and Innovation Plan 2022-2027

<https://www.research.gov.ro/programe-nationale/planul-national-de-cercetare-dezvoltare-si-inovare-2022-2027/pncdi-iv-programe-subprograme-instrumente-de-finantare/>

Ministry of Education and Research - Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation (UEFISCDI) (National level)

Code of Conduct in Research and Innovation

<https://www.research.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/COD-Etica-in-CDI.pdf>

Gender Equality Plan

<https://uefiscdi.gov.ro/plan-egalitate-de-gen-uefiscdi>

White Paper on the Transition to Open Science (2023–2030) – Strategic document on the Framework for the Development of Open Science in Romania

<https://www.open-science.ro/resurse/the-white-book-of-the-transition-to-open-science>

VUT Innovation Policy

https://www.valahia.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025_Politica_privind_inovarea.pdf

VUT Code of Ethics and University Deontology

https://www.valahia.ro/wp-content/uploads/cod_etica_deontologie_universitara.pdf

VUT Open Science

<https://www.valahia.ro/cercetare-new/open-science/>

<https://www.open-science.ro/>

University of Camerino (UNICAM)

Open Science Policy

https://www.unicam.it/sites/default/files/documenti-pag/2025/open%20science%20policy_EN.pdf

Gender Equality Plan

https://www.unicam.it/sites/default/files/documenti-pag/2025/GEP_ENG.pdf

Code of Ethics

<https://www.unicam.it/sites/default/files/regolamenti/CODICE%20ETICO%20E%20DI%20COMPORTAMENTO%202024.pdf>

Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) 2025-2027

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YZHtNxfiSlyybYMtbj8xFlklibBn395fd/view?usp=drive_link

Open Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment of Researchers

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10Dauz0Kx_JED2tuSAO3ixnzPikORWEQ5/view?usp=drive_link

Coalition for the Advancement of Research Assessment (CoARA) Action Plan

https://www.unicam.it/sites/default/files/documenti-pag/2025/University_of_Camerino_%20CoARA_Action_Plan.pdf

Route 2030 – Sustainability plan 2025-2027

https://www.unicam.it/sites/default/files/documenti-pag/2025/ROUTE%202030_Piano%20di%20Sostenibilita%CC%80%20UNICAM_25-27.pdf

Guidelines for the use of Artificial Intelligence

https://www.unicam.it/sites/default/files/documenti-pag/2024/DR_Linee%20guida%20IA_signed.pdf

Södertörn University (SH)

Policy for the Work Environment and Equal Opportunities

[Equal opportunities](#)

Swedish version: Guidelines for gender mainstreaming

[Gender mainstreaming](#)

Routines and actions for students at Södertörn University in cases of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment

[Routines and actions for students](#)

Common Code of Conduct for Managers and Employees at Södertörn University

[Common code](#)

Research Strategy for Södertörn University

[Research strategy](#)

Guidelines for Research Data Management

[Research data management](#)

Swedish version: Research ethics

[Research ethics](#)

Guidelines for open access publication

[Open access publication](#)

Swedish version: Policy for quality assurance and quality development

[Policy for quality assurance](#)

Swedish version: Open Science Policy

[Open science policy](#)

D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics (TAE), Bulgaria

European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/getFile/37/ALLEA-European-Code-of-Conduct-for-Research-Integrity-2017-Digital_BG.pdf

Gender Equality Plan 2025-2028

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Plan_Gender_Equality_2025_2028.pdf

Policy for the exploitation and commercialization of the results of scientific research at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Politika_EksKom_NI.pdf

Intellectual Property Policy of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Politika_IntSobstvenost.pdf

Strategy for the Exploitation and Commercialization of Research Results of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Strategia_EksKom_NI.pdf

Strategy for the Internationalization of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics (2021–2027)

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Strategia_Internacionalizacia_2021_2027.pdf

Strategy for the Development of Research Activities of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov (2024–2030)

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Strategia_NID_24_30.pdf

Rules of Procedure for the Activities of the Institute for Scientific Research at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Pravilnik_INI_24-1.pdf

Regulations for the Exploitation and Commercialization of Research Results of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Pravilnik_EksKom_NI.pdf

Intellectual Property Regulations of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Pravilnik_ISob.pdf

Regulations for the Implementation of the European Charter for Researchers at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Pravilnik_EHartaUcheni.pdf

Regulations for the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Pravilnik_Naznizsledovateli.pdf

Regulations for the Management of Research Infrastructure at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics

https://www.uni-svishtov.bg/portal/file/Pravilnik_NIIInf_25.pdf

Conclusion

KreativEU is an alliance of 11 European universities, united by the common goal of establishing a fully European University that places the creative potential derived from Europe's cultural heritage at the heart of its teaching, research, and knowledge transfer activities. The objective of this document, which constitutes a deliverable within the framework of WP3 KreativEU Research work package, is to outline guidelines and recommendations for good research practice as a prerequisite for excellent research conducted at the KreativEU partner universities.

Specifically, this document establishes alliance-wide standards for conducting the research work, covering the following topics:

- Code of conduct,
- Research integrity,
- Gender issues,
- Open science,
- Science for policy,
- Responsible use of AI in research,
- Research security,
- Sustainability in research,
- Research ethics.

By following commonly accepted guidelines and recommendations on good research practice that, where possible, stem from EU-level documents, the KreativEU Alliance members demonstrate a commitment to conducting trustworthy, ethical, and impactful research and to serving as a model for other EU university or research alliances and consortia.

PART B: DEVELOPMENT, METHODOLOGY, IMPACT AND POTENTIAL OF THE DELIVERABLE

1 Methodology and Development of the KreativEU Study Protocol and Methodology

1.1 Development of time table

The discussions on this document began in June 2025 in Opole at the WP3 in-person meeting. Realising that the genuine research is not a part of the KreativEU project, but that research is an essential endeavour at all 11 partner universities, the results of which will be delivered to almost all of the activities planned by WP3, WP3 members have decided to compose a document that will describe the most strategic aspects of a responsible research environment and to which all partner universities will commit.

The first version of this document was available in September 2025, and since then, it has passed two rounds of comments and revisions within WP3. The final draft of the document was approved by the WP3 team on January 2, 2026, and sent for internal assessment by each institution. Comments on the final draft, submitted by the WP3 members on behalf of their institutions, were sent to the WP3 leader by January 21, 2026. WP3 leader updated the final draft accordingly and submitted it on January 29, 2026, to the Quality Officer and to the Data Protection Officer.

1.2 Formation of working groups

No working groups were formed to work on this document. USB has been the principal author and idea bearer of the text, while the other WP3 members commented individually on various parts.

1.3 Involvement of other WP Teams and KreativEU governing bodies

No other WP Team or KreativEU governing body has participated in the creation of this document. Nevertheless, this document refers to several documents prepared by the other WP Teams, such as the Data Protection Plan (1.5), the Diversity and Inclusion Plan (D1.7), the Sustainable Mobility Plan (7.1), the Internationalisation Plan (D8.3) or the WP5 White Paper “Creating a mutually reinforcing relationship between ethical/sustainable AI and Europe’s cultural heritage”.

1.4 Collection of information from all partner institutions

Individual partners delivered information on their strategic documents regarding good research practice. References and links to these documents are provided in the Appendix of this document. Individual partners also augmented some of the document chapters by pointing to the more general documents and strategies they use in their everyday research.

1.5 Alignment of the deliverable with local rules and regulations

The standards of research practice described in this document are part of many EU documents, guidelines, and recommendations. More importantly, these standards are widely accepted by the worldwide scientific community as a guarantee of safe, ethical, and trustworthy research. Therefore, this document, in principle, cannot contradict any local rules or regulations.

1.6 Draft of structure of deliverable

After introducing the research aspects of the KreativEU project and emphasising the need to share common values and principles across our research environments, this document elaborates on several important aspects of good and responsible research practice:

- Code of conduct,
- Research integrity,
- Gender issues,
- Open science,
- Science for policy,
- Responsible use of AI in research,
- Research security,
- Sustainability in research,
- Research ethics.

In the Appendix, the fundamental documents that individual KreativEU Alliance members possess to support their good research practice are listed. This structure was considered during initial discussions in June 2025 and finalised during comments on the first draft in September 2025.

1.7 Draft of first version of deliverable

The first version of the document was shared among the WP3 Team in September 2025. Following the comments, the individual chapters got their current structure: a description of the topic, KreativEU commitment, and further resources.

1.8 Consultation and assessment by responsible WP and other relevant KreativEU bodies

Quality Control Team

Data Protection Team

Key Project Team

Steering Committee

1.9 Creation of final version

The final version was developed by the WP3 leader and co-leader and sent to the Project Coordinator on January 7, 2026.

2 Updating the KreativEU Study Protocol and Methodology

In line with the KreativEU Alliance's long-term vision and reflecting the steady development of good research standards (e.g., AI, activities related to research security), this document will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to address any concerns and necessary changes that may arise when conducting research at the KreativEU partner universities, as well as any new trends within the European research environment.

3 Impact and potential for innovation

3.1 Added Value

The added value of the KreativEU Study Methodology and Protocol lies in its commitment to share standards and general recommendations for conducting good research and for building and sustaining a responsible research environment across all 11 KreativEU Alliance partners, thereby promoting synergy between partners and reinforcing each partner in research-related issues. Learning from each other, improving our internal processes and regulations, and ultimately enhancing the excellence of our research that is safe, ethical and trustworthy are the assets that reflect commonly shared values found also in many EU-issued documents.

3.1.1 for researchers

Research ethics and integrity, elaborated upon in the Codes of Conduct of each of the 11 KreativEU Alliance partners, form the basics of researchers' behaviour, leading to the safe, ethical and trustworthy research on which other researchers can draw and which is highly valued also by society, the ultimate "purchaser" of our scientific achievements. Researchers, especially the younger ones, need to commit themselves to these values and be mentored by their senior fellows, who in turn need to adhere to them. This mutual reinforcement and the clear delineation of what is good and what is not in conducting research are inevitable for a sustainable future of science.

3.1.2 for KreativEU

Heterogeneity among KreativEU partners certainly implies heterogeneity in their processes, rules and recommendations. This is not to say that some are bad, but rather that some may be more elaborate than others. By learning from one another and sharing best practices, cohesion and excellence are strengthened, the research environment is enhanced, and research collaboration is facilitated. The Diversity and Inclusion Plan (D1.7) only underscores these benefits.

3.1.3 for the European Union

The KreativEU Study Methodology and Protocol respects and is motivated by the EU-issued rules and recommendations on various aspects of research. The resulting common framework for conducting research responsibly, ethically, and with trust thus supports EU values, demonstrates how universities across Europe can build a strong common ground for research, and enables them to collaborate to address many pressing global challenges.

3.2 Potential for innovation

Innovations based on research cannot thrive in an insecure, unpredictable environment. Only a safe, ethical, and trustworthy research environment can foster sufficient creative potential to conduct excellent, impactful research. The KreativEU Study Methodology and Protocol also aims to inspire other European University alliances to transparently state and share their common views on responsible research with high societal relevance and acceptance.



KreativEU

Knowledge & Creativity
European **University**



Co-funded by
the European Union