

European research universities agree on a set of principles for international cooperation in research

The German U15, The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities, and Udice emphasise the necessity to strengthen international cooperation in research to meet global challenges.

Ahead of the ERA Forum's Standing Subgroup on the Global Approach meeting at the beginning of May, where Member States representatives will be invited to exchange on the principles for international cooperation in research and innovation, the German U15, The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities and Udice wish to reiterate their commitment to strengthen international cooperation in research, while mitigating the challenges associated with international partnerships.

With Russia's attack on Ukraine from 24 February, and at times of unstable geopolitical context, the three university networks express their uncompromising solidarity with Ukrainian universities. They commit to providing help and support for students and researchers from Ukraine affected by the war, and for Russian staff and students who face persecution for opposing it.

At the same time, the German U15, The Guild, and Udice emphasise that articulating a fair, democratic and sustainable response to the challenges Europe and the world are currently facing requires an effective cooperation between research universities worldwide.

In particular, acknowledging the [Bonn Declaration on Freedom of Scientific Research](#), the European Commission's [Communication on the Global Approach to Research and Innovation](#), the [Marseille Declaration on International Cooperation in Research and Innovation](#), and the [Council conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe](#), the German U15, The Guild, and Udice stress that:

1. International cooperation is essential for the progress of science and benefits humanity as a whole.
2. Research universities are willing to help prevent risks associated with international cooperation.
3. International scientific cooperation by research universities is a major diplomatic tool.
4. European programmes in favour of academic and scientific cooperation must contribute to making Europe more attractive, open to cooperation with the rest of the world.
5. Research universities are one of the pillars of European development and technological sovereignty.
6. International collaboration in research and higher education is essential for the sustainable and balanced development of all regions in the world.

Christine Clerici, President of Udice and Rector of Université Paris Cité, said: "Despite the crises, tensions and now war on our doorstep in Europe, international cooperation remains paramount for research intensive universities. The current dramatic international situation invites us to rethink our approach to international collaboration and to reaffirm our common principles and values. It is essential that this work be carried out on a European level and I welcome the close working relationship that the Udice group is establishing with its European partners. Together we can build a realistic, balanced and mutually beneficial vision of international cooperation in higher education, research and innovation."

Jan Palmowski, Secretary-General of The Guild, said: “The war in Ukraine, and the need for solidarity with Ukraine, must go hand-in-hand with a vigorous embrace of international collaboration in science. At a time of crisis, the need for international partnership and collaboration are all the greater to address common challenges. Europe’s universities have a huge part to play in helping the EU address fundamental societal, technological and economic challenges, and we are ready to do so.”

Jan Wöpking, Managing Director of German U15, said: “The Russian war against Ukraine marks a fundamental turning point in contemporary politics. It is also likely to cause substantial changes to international cooperation in science. We have to shape these changes. International cooperation is not only vital for tackling the grand challenges of sustainability and digitization. It can also contribute to making the world more open and democratic. It is our responsibility to ensure that it does.”