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Una.Resin, WP3, Pilot Action (3) Citizen Science, Concept note

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► **To cite this version:**

Ekaterina Smoliakova, Marlies Lambrecht, Sara Decoster, Daniela Schoster, Henning Rust, et al..
Una.Resin, WP3, Pilot Action (3) Citizen Science, Concept note. 2022. hal-04372557

HAL Id: hal-04372557

<https://hal.science/hal-04372557v1>

Preprint submitted on 4 Jan 2024

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UNA.RESIN, WP3,

PILOT ACTION (3) – CITIZEN SCIENCE,

CONCEPT NOTE

Concept Note

Version 6

Wp3 Team

25/11/2022

Context

The current concept note prepared under WP3 “Una Europa Strengthening Human Capital” of the Una Resin project.

‘Una.Resin’ aims at building a common eco-system of research and innovation within the Una Europa Alliance. Una Europa is an alliance of nine leading research universities which goal is to create a European inter-university environment by triggering institutionalised cooperation in the area of education, research, and societal outreach. Una Europa has the objective to transform the institutional framework of its member institutions to prepare for the next wave of global challenges.

Through the three-year Horizon 2020 ‘Una.Resin’ pilot project, Una Europa is determining the purpose and areas for future research collaborations, within and beyond Una Europa. Una.Resin partners are creating/developing strategies for Research & Innovation agendas, opening up and sharing Research Infrastructure and Resources, and strengthening Human Capital. Una.Resin will implement and evaluate pilot actions for the systematic support for excellence as well as create cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral teams.

In the coming months, four pilot actions will be designed and implemented within WP3 to further explore one particularly fundamental dimension of Human Capital: interlocking research activities with the broader university ecosystem for barrier free, interdisciplinary, cross-border collaborations and team science.

These innovative formats will be developed in relation to (1) team science (understood as an organization of research which pools together expertise of scientists coming from different fields as well as enables interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility); (2) open science (understood as the process of making the content and process of research activities and research outputs transparent and accessible to others); (3) citizen science (understood as public participation and collaboration in scientific research); and (4) research-business collaboration.

The purpose of this concept note is to present a first set of specifications for the design and implementation of the pilot action (3) dedicated to Citizen Science (further CS).

Pilot (3) – Citizen science

Project methodology

A four steps approach was applied since the beginning of the project. First two steps were focused on a mapping of the CS institutional strategies, policies, support services and best practices. The data collection was carried out through different questionnaires shared with administrative staff, researchers and university policy makers. The acquired data was analysed and had two documents: Mapping HR Strategies and priorities for joint strategy and Analysis of the Open Research support services and practices in the frame of WP2.

Next two steps concerned brainstorming sessions and workshops organized by and with the Citizen Engagement Cluster for effective sharing of experiences, analyzing difficulties and suggesting possible solutions for strengthening CS at the level of the alliance. These sessions were also used to come to a shared understanding of what is and what could be CS for Una Europa, as well as to define concrete grounding principles and common standards of CS. The co-creation workshop that took place the 1st of July 2022, in the online format, was an important milestone in the discussion of CS types, methodologies, issues and also possible formats of institutional cooperation aiming at sharing of support structures.

These four steps and collected inputs led to the first idea for the pilot action presented and discussed during the brainstorming session held in Edinburg the 29th of September 2022.

Goals, priorities and format of the pilot

Following the analysis of CS area state of art in the Una Europa universities several recommendations on how to enhance the presence of CS projects were made. For the pilot action, it was suggested to place a focus on the **raising of awareness**, improving **CS knowledge** and **providing competences** that would strengthen human capital in Una Europa universities.

To achieve this, the Citizen Engagement cluster, together with a group of experts in CS will reflect upon and produce support materials that will raise awareness about the benefits, needs and impact of CS, as well as provide some best practices in putting in place CS projects. These support materials will be organized in the **form of the toolkit**.

The Una Europa Citizen Science Toolkit will comprise **8 interviews** conducted with renowned researchers who are experts in the field of CS, representing 8 universities participating in the Una.Resin project. These experts will be posed with **8 specific questions**, each addressing key aspects of putting in place a citizen science project. Final video materials will be arranged thematically by questions. The Citizen Engagement cluster will then analyse the interviews and distil **a set of recommendations and guidelines** for those who will be interested to initiate a citizen science project.



The pilot will concentrate on one selected focus area: **One Health** or **Cultural Heritage**, Una Europa focus areas included in Una.Resin project, — and will contain the work with the respective Una Europa SSC (Self-steering committee of OH or CH). A workshop between Citizen Engagement Cluster and CS experts nominated by SSC will be organised to discuss interview questions.

The toolkit will be published online in the form of **Open Educational Resources** (OERs) on the Una Europa website and other OERs platforms. Using and creating OERs is an ethos Una Europa embraces, focused on openness, inclusion, and sharing innovative work to benefit others. Each university will also be in charge to publish the toolkit or communicate on it at their dedicated platforms. During the closing event of the Una.Resin project, the results of the pilot will be disseminated to a larger public.

The pilot will thus investigate the possibility to co-produce the knowledge on CS by sharing best practices and highlighting the benefits of CS for the research activities. It will also test the possibility to transform the knowledge on how to put in place a CS project into a **transversal skill** needed for enhancement of impactful and responsible research.

As an integral component of the Strengthening Human Capital Work Package, this pilot project is aligned with the overarching goals of this work package, which revolve around enhancing the capabilities of **early-stage researchers** by equipping them with transversal skills that can facilitate diverse career paths. In this context, the primary target audience for this pilot project comprises early-stage researchers. Its central objective is to inform them about the various manifestations of citizen science, elucidate its benefits, requirements, and impact, and strengthen their abilities in project design and implementation.

