

# FORTHEM

## NEWSLETTER #7

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## FORTHEM sets its next funding period in motion

**Following the good news FORTHEM received from the European Union in July regarding the success of its grant application, the Alliance is now leveraging the knowledge and expertise gained from the Erasmus+ funding period since 2019 and preparing for the next funding period with an improved structure, new projects, and ambitious plans for the future.**

FORTHEM is an alliance of nine public universities with a well-balanced geographical distribution in Europe. These nine universities now have an important mandate to ensure unparalleled levels of systematic, structural, and sustainable institutionalised cooperation to achieve this transition. From 2023 on, FORTHEM will take a bottom-up approach that comprises five missions:

- 1. European Campus:** international educational opportunities for everyone and sharing European values.
- 2. Skills and Competences:** fostering future-oriented personal and professional development.
- 3. Research, Innovation and Transfer:** cross-sectoral cooperation and training for future top performers in R&I.
- 4. Labs and Co-Creation:** FORTHEM Labs as arenas of co-creation addressing transnational challenges.
- 5. Service-to-Society:** growth through civic engagement and learning regions.

All five missions are closely interlinked and interdependent, contributing specific and complementary measures. Together, they promote knowledge generation, value creation and economic growth, providing a solid foundation for a European University.

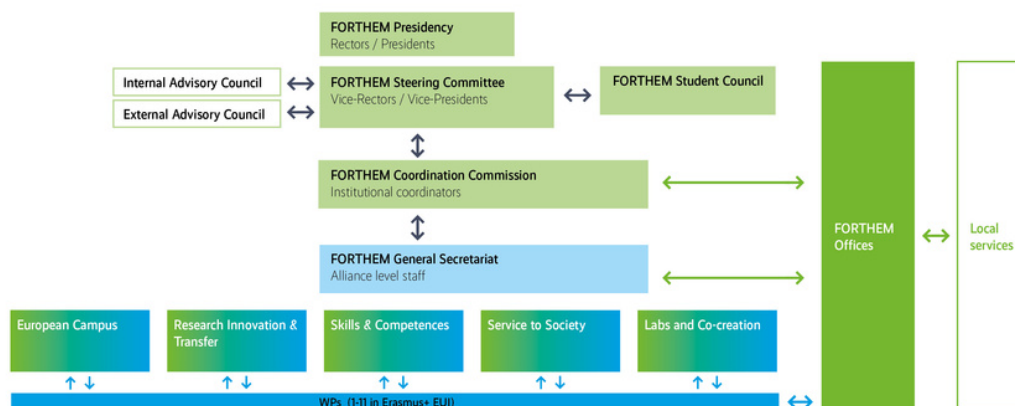
Furthermore, during the next funding period, the FORTHEM Presidency, Steering Committee and Coordination Commission are going to have rotating chairs, with the change taking place every year in January. This will grant each university an opportunity to lead the Alliance and provide representation at the highest levels.

A centralised administration, called the General Secretariat, is going to be set up. It will make the transfer of knowledge, information, and best practices easier, support alliance-wide decision making, centralise certain services (such as communication, IT and law) for the whole alliance and increase the visibility of FORTHEM beyond the Alliance.

All in all, while the last three years have allowed FORTHEM to build a strong basis for a successful collaboration, these developments will ensure that at the universities forming the Alliance, FORTHEM becomes part of students' and staff's everyday lives and offers them unprecedented opportunities.



### Governance structure



## University of Burgundy celebrates its 300th anniversary

Heads representing all FORTHEM universities spent three days in Dijon with Vincent Thomas, president of the University of Burgundy. Georg Krausch (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz), Massimo Midiri (University of Palermo), Jacek Lipok (University of Opole), Maria Vicenta Mestre Escriva (University of Valencia), Radu Sorin (University of Lucian Blage din Sibiu), Keijo Hamalainen (University of Jyväskylä), Goril Hannas (University of Agder) and Indriķis Muižnieks (University of Latvia) and their respective colleagues were delighted to meet again.

After a weekend dedicated to discovering the local delicacies and exploring the famous Hospices de Beaune and Burgundian vineyards, the FORTHEM delegation arrived at the university grounds on Monday for official speeches given by the president of the University of Burgundy and local politicians including François Rebsamen, Mayor of Dijon. Afterwards, all the rectors took part in a big parade through the university grounds, walking just behind the president of the university. Bringing the Heads of our universities together for such an event helps strengthen the bonds between the alliance members and makes us even stronger, and all the participants were delighted to have been able to attend the celebration and spend some quality time together.

**FORTHEM wishes the University of Burgundy a very happy anniversary!**



## FORTHEM staff week for language centres

From October 10-13, the Language Centre of the University of Burgundy invited colleagues from FORTHEM partner universities to Dijon in order to network and share good practises.

The official part of the programme started on Tuesday morning with a short introduction of all FORTHEM language centres and an introduction of the new FORTHEM funding application by Špela Jerala, a uB FORTHEM office representative. After lunch, JGU FORTHEM office presented the concept of Europa Forum, which is going to be part of FORTHEM Beyond 2022 and a uB administrative staff member gave the participants a guided tour of the city before dinner.

On Wednesday, the participants attended several workshops about the best practices from FORTHEM language centres and language units, team-teaching and language teacher students' internships. During the last day of the staff week, the European Language degree project was presented, the next steps for language centres were agreed on and Claire Despierres from uB presented the case of language support for refugees and migrants.

Around 15 people from 6 FORTHEM partner universities attended staff week.



# New call for short-term mobilities is now open

**FORTHEM Alliance's short-term mobilities programme is undoubtedly its success story. Between March and August 2022, around 28 students took part in an individual short-term mobility and 342 students participated in one of the 18 collective short-term mobilities organised during this same period. The mobilities were organised by all 7 FORTHEM partner universities from FORTHEM's first funding period.**

The new call for short-term mobilities taking place between March and September 2023 was launched on October 14, 2022, and it is open until November 22, 2022.

Students who wish to take part in a 5-day mobility at one of FORTHEM Alliance's 9 partner universities are invited to apply to a maximum of two collective short-term mobilities or one individual and one collective short-term mobility.

The collective short-term mobilities organised within FORTHEM offer students an opportunity to expand their knowledge and develop and enhance skills through learning in an international environment. The variety of topics related to academic fields, the interactive teaching formats and English as a teaching language have proved to offer students an engaging learning experience.

The programmes of the 10 collective short-term mobilities selected from the FORTHEM Alliance and all information on how to apply to the mobilities and scholarships can be found [on our website](#).

Students can choose from the following:

1. Exploring the circular economy in Burgundy
2. "Life and Vision" - Design your life (organised by Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany, held at the University of Opole, Opole, Poland)
3. International Summer School in Sport Event Management 2023 (University of Jyväskylä, Finland)
4. Summer School on "Food writing" (University of Palermo, Palermo, Italy)
5. Sport and food, the healthy life? (University of Burgundy, France)
6. Pathway from farm to fork: healthy and sustainable food system (University of Valencia, Spain)
7. Interdisciplinary approach to treat frailty syndrome in seniors (University of Opole, Opole, Poland)
8. Myopia: a visual problem on the rise. Prevention and dissemination to society (University of Valencia, Spain)
9. Master Class "Algebraic Geometry and Physics" (University of Burgundy, France)
10. Summer Educational School for Researchers: "Soft skills and didactic innovation" (University of Palermo, Italy)

[Click here to apply!](#)





## News from partner universities

### University of Burgundy's visit to Jyväskylä and Agder

Vincent Thomas, president of uB, visited Jyväskylä and Agder along with a delegation of professors in sport sciences, robotics and teaching education.

The delegation had the opportunity to meet colleagues in these fields at both universities; moreover, they could explore the campuses and cities. In Agder, the delegation visited both the Kristiansand and the Grimstad campus.

### University of Valencia FORTHEM Campus to take place in spring 2023

**The main objective of this FORTHEM Campus, organised in collaboration with the Digital Transformation Lab, is to address digital challenges in the context of the European Union. Universal access to technology has brought about substantial changes in human relations, both at a professional and personal level. Therefore, from an international and multidisciplinary perspective, the Campus aims to analyse and investigate current and relevant issues related to the digitalisation process in which societies are immersed, especially after the Covid-19 health crisis.**

### University of Palermo's FORTHEM Campus "Diversity and Migration" is taking off

**"Diversity and Migration", the FORTHEM Campus organised by the University of Palermo, welcomed the students from the Alliance partners. The students enrolled for the FORTHEM Campus are from the University of Valencia, University of Burgundy and University of Jyväskylä and have different academic backgrounds, such as Law, Sociology, Business Management, International Studies and Social Sciences.**

The welcome day planned for the occasion was an incredible opportunity to meet new peers, and now the students are starting to explore the Campus and the city. In fact, the semester has already started, the students have returned to the classrooms, and the FORTHEM Campus' seminars and workshops are also to take place shortly. The students will have an opportunity to attend many courses made available thanks to the rich FC UniPa "Diversity and Migration" educational programme. The classes offered by the Departments of Law, Architecture, Cultures and Societies, Economics, Psychology, and many others, along with the hands-on activities, for example, cultural visits, workshops and labs, will introduce the students of the Alliance to the FORTHEM Campus topics, such as migration, cultural mixtures, and social inclusivity.

## **FORTHEM staff week held to discuss leadership in higher education**

**Is there a European perspective on leadership in higher education?**

**Moreover, what about organisational impacts on leadership and what do universities expect from their executive staff and personnel development programmes?**

These questions guided the FORTHEM staff week which took place at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz from September 13-16 (2022). In an intense debate at JGU's campus, the participants from Finland, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Germany discussed leadership and discovered new perspectives on leadership in higher education.

There is a shared perspective: in learning organisations such as universities leadership is of high relevance and within FORTHEM, understanding leadership, as well as sharing and supporting ideas and activities in this field provides an added value. In a series of workshops, the participants discussed responsibility, support of team staff, intercultural communication, and problem-solving strategies in an international setting. In a job shadowing with a colleague from JGU, each participant had the opportunity to strengthen information exchange in their respective field of work.

## **WP3 Evaluation Meeting and the Digital Academy presentation**

**On September 27-28, the University of Palermo hosted two important FORTHEM events: the WP3 Evaluation Meeting and the presentation of the Digital Academy, the Alliance's digital platform for virtual mobility, collaboration and networking among students, teachers and external experts.**

After discussing the work carried out and the results achieved during the 3 years of the project in collaboration of the FORTHEM partners, the presentation of the Digital Academy took place. It was held on September 28 from 10:00 to 12:00 in Palazzo Steri (Sala delle Capriate) and took place both in-person and online; the participants included prof. Massimo Midiri, Rector of UniPa and prof. Fabio Mazzola, Vice-Chancellor for Education and Internationalisation. Among the speakers were Prof. Sabine Hoffmann, FORTHEM Project Scientific Coordinator, and Dr. Claudio Ruocco, University Information System and Portal Area, whose work was fundamental for the conception and implementation of the platform. Since January 2021, the Digital Academy has offered a rich variety of online courses in English and the seven languages of the universities belonging to the FORTHEM Alliance: Italian, German, French, Spanish, Finnish, Latvian and Polish, making it possible to share the educational excellence of European universities for the benefit of all students in the Alliance.





## **FIT FORTHEM news: FORTHEM Alliance partners to join OpenAIRE-NEXUS infrastructure**

**One of the aims of FIT FORTHEM project is to design and develop a collaborative environment in order to facilitate the relations between partner universities and their innovation ecosystems. FIT FORTHEM WP4 committed to creating a virtual platform that provides one entry point to the open-access research results of FORTHEM partner universities.**

### **About OpenAIRE**

However, the OpenAIRE infrastructure, which has been funded by the European Commission since 2006, has already developed appropriate digital tools for this purpose, making them desirable to FIT FORTHEM. OpenAIRE represents the accumulated knowledge of a series of European projects and creates tools for the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC). EOSC enables free reuse of research data from publicly funded research, and it is a co-created set of services with an open governance and a space for innovation. Moreover, EOSC is a long-term pillar of the Digital Single Market.

### **Signing a Memorandum of Understanding**

In order to ensure access to the OpenAIRE solutions and benefit from the support from EOSC in the implementation of data linkage, it was necessary to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between OpenAIRE and the FORTHEM entities. Since it involves linking individual partner universities' data repositories, the FIT FORTHEM team ensured that the MoU was signed at each university.

In the MoU drafted by WP4, the parties specifically agreed on the use of the PROVIDE Dashboard (exchange of

metadata), EXPLORE Portal (intelligent search engine) and CONNECT Dashboard (customised portal with integrated Open Science procedures). The signing of this MoU carries no financial implications for the signatories; the activities to be carried out under it are subject to the availability of staff and financial resources. An OpenAIRE representative signed the MoU in October. The agreement is in effect until the end of the OpenAIRE project (June 30, 2023), and may be extended by mutual written agreement. Since OpenAIRE has been consistently funded by the European Commission for many years, it can be assumed that the cooperation will continue beyond the end of the contract.

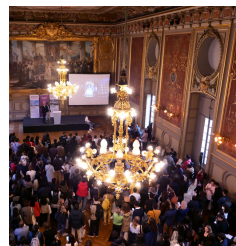
### **The benefits of linked data repositories**

- 1.** Facilitated matchmaking at individual level, when the researchers use linked repositories as a tool to detect potential research collaborators and co-authors for publications, or find counterparts to answer calls for projects. Such a tool would be especially beneficial for university students and young researchers, as it ensures an early and accelerated internationalization of their research.
- 2.** Facilitated matchmaking at the strategic level, with digital research footprints of each university represented within a joint FORTHEM research space. Although the OpenAIRE is not a Current Research Information System (CRIS), it does allow the linking of data repositories for accumulating knowledge on the individual data repository systems of FORTHEM partners to potentially advance further integration in the future.
- 3.** Enhanced visibility of FORTHEM Alliance's research results by facilitating further matchmaking between the R&I offer from universities (solvers) and the innovation demand from the society and the business systems (seekers). This aspect holds a huge potential for ensuring that research expertise meets societal needs more closely.

**Text by Nina Straub with contributions by Katarzyna Molek-Kozakowska and Agnese Rusakova**

# Photos from FORTHEM partners' activities

- Welcome Days at partner universities





# Photos from FORTHEM partners' activities

- Researchers Night



# Photos from FORTHEM partners' activities

- Erasmus Days



## Upcoming events



### GERMAN LANGUAGE COURSE

JGU Mainz offers a tutored online course in German language.

Courses will be taking place from 26.10.2022- 1.02.2023.

[Apply](#)



### NEW SHORT-TERM MOBILITY OPPORTUNITIES

You can apply for a week-long activity as a part of the group of international students who will meet on site or for an individual project in one of our nine universities. March-September 2023

[Apply](#)



### CELLULAR SIGNALING. DYNAMIC PROCESSES WITHIN LIVING CELLS

Two days of lectures, discussions and a poster session involving speakers (PIs and Students) from all the FORTHEM Universities.

8.12-9.12.

[Apply](#)



# FORTHEM partner universities

[Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz](#) (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz), Germany

[University of Burgundy](#) (Université de Bourgogne), France

[University of Jyväskylä](#) (Jyväskylän yliopisto), Finland

[University of Opole](#) (Uniwersytet Opolski), Poland

[University of Palermo](#) (Università degli Studi di Palermo), Italy

[University of Lavia](#) (Latvijas Universitāte), Latvia

[University of Valencia](#) (Universitat de Valencia), Spain

[University of Agder](#) (Universitetet i Agder), Norway

[Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu](#) (Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu), Romania



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