

2025 Learning & Teaching Thematic Peer Groups

Call for participation

Deadline for application: 17 January 2025

1. Introduction

Across our [activities on learning and teaching](#), the European University Association (EUA) aims to draw attention to its importance in European higher education and invite EUA member universities to exchange practices and discuss key considerations. To do this, EUA coordinates [Learning & Teaching Thematic Peer Groups](#) that provide participating universities with an opportunity for peer learning and exchange of experiences, while at the same time contributing to the Association's policy work on learning and teaching, e.g. in the context of the Bologna Process. The work of these groups also feeds into EUA's annual [European Learning & Teaching Forum](#).

The main objectives of the groups are:

- to discuss and explore practices and lessons learnt in organising and implementing learning and teaching in European universities;
- to contribute to the enhancement of learning and teaching by identifying key considerations on the selected themes.

Through this call, EUA seeks participants for the 2025 round of Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs), which will focus on **managing and organising staff development**. It is co-organised with [STAFF-DEV](#), a three-year Erasmus+ co-funded project, led by EUA in partnership with the University of Oslo (Norway), University College Cork (Ireland), Utrecht University (the Netherlands) and Ruhr University Bochum (Germany). The aim of this project is to analyse how staff development and academic assessment are conducted at European higher education institutions and to strengthen institutional capacity and strategies in this regard.

2. Themes and expected outcomes

Attention to learning and teaching has increased in recent years, both at higher education institutions and in policy discussions in Europe. In order to enhance learning and teaching and the student experience, one prominent need is adequate staff development practices and approaches, as well as recognition for teachers to continuously improve through academic assessment and career paths. The 2025 TPGs will explore staff development across higher education institutions in Europe, including how staff-student partnerships can enrich teaching, support staff development, and promote a more collaborative and inclusive approach to learning. Each TPG will also highlight areas for improvement.

The three TPGs will be dedicated to the following sub-topics:

1) Enhancing teacher engagement and expanding staff development opportunities

With the development of learning and teaching centres across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and increased interest towards the enhancement of learning and teaching generally, the topic of staff development in teaching has gained attention. However, as already identified in the 2018 TPG on the [‘Evaluation of learning and teaching’](#) and the 2023 TPG on [“Development and strategic benefits of learning and teaching centres”](#), motivating staff to take part in training for teaching development may be a challenge. Following up on this work, this 2025 TPG will explore different models of organising, sustaining, and expanding staff engagement in development opportunities. Moreover, it will address how this will contribute to reaching wider groups of beneficiaries, increasing the relevance of the developmental offer, and making staff development forward-looking in addressing present and future needs in learning and teaching. The TPG will also examine how staff development can foster a greater sense of community in teaching, beyond the perception of teaching being an individual, isolated task, including a focus on how organisational institutional and national structures and cultures may influence staff development practices.

2) Staff development and transnational collaboration

Transnational collaboration in learning and teaching can take various forms – the most visible arguably being the provision of joint programmes, which have existed for almost two decades and have become a high priority at European policy level. Beyond joint programmes and other types of joint education provision, learning and teaching has also benefited from increased transnational collaboration in the context of the European Universities alliances – for instance with the creation of joint learning and teaching centres, or closer cooperation on defined areas of common interest. Against this background, this TPG will address how to address staff development needs across various institutions, and exchange on best ways to engage in collaboration in this area. The TPG will also explore how existing and new transnational collaboration (including from professional, disciplinary and thematic initiatives and networks etc.) can contribute to better achieving the goals informing transnational collaboration. Applicants for this TPG should be involved in some form of joint education provision, including but not limited to participation in European Universities alliances. Applicants are thus required to refer to this experience in their application.

3) Ensuring the quality and impact of staff development in teaching

Provision of staff development and support for exchanges and collaboration between teachers is common among higher education institutions in Europe, as confirmed by EUA's [Trends 2024 report](#). To further support this trend and advocate for adequate resources and conditions for staff development, it is important to understand and analyse the impact and efficiency of staff development offers, notably against indicators and evidence used in managing the offer and the overall learning and teaching strategies of institutions. This group will explore how the use of data, including institutional research, and feedback from peers and students, can be leveraged to assess the impact of different forms of staff development, and how staff development impacts the institutional culture of teaching. The group will identify main indicators for evaluating how staff development activities enhance student learning. It will also suggest ways to amplify and adequately use them. Group members should have some experience in staff development. Applicants are thus required to include this experience in their application.

All groups will reflect on:

- how institutions understand the topic of staff development and what it implies for them;
- the key challenges related to the theme;
- what kind of good practice can help to address the key challenges;
- what kind of institutional policies and processes can help address the identified key challenges, and possibly what key considerations and/or recommendations could be developed.

3. Activities and timeline

Eight to ten EUA member universities will take part in each TPG. Group members will attend **three meetings** during 2025 (between March and November), each lasting one or two days. One of the three meetings will take place in person, hosted by a group member, and one online. The group is free to decide whether to organise the third meeting in person or online. Meeting venues and dates will be jointly determined once group members have been selected and the availability of selected group members has been mapped by the group coordinator.

Based on the exchange of knowledge, experiences and practices, each group will summarise the conclusions in the form of a short **report** that will be published as part of [EUA's Learning & Teaching paper series](#). A **final workshop** will facilitate exchange and discussion among all groups. It will be organised prior to the **European Learning & Teaching Forum** in February 2026, which all group members are encouraged to attend, as workshop facilitators or participants. It will provide an occasion to present each group's outcomes to a wider audience.

4. Group chairs

The EUA secretariat will assign a coordinator to each group. The coordinator will support the group's work, organise and attend all meetings, and draft the group's report.

EUA will also appoint one representative from the group to act as chair. Chairing responsibilities include the planning of the group's work (including the meetings and potential asynchronous work), facilitation and steering of the discussions during meetings, and ensuring that the group stays focused and goal-oriented in collaboration with the EUA secretariat. Group chairs will receive a fee-waiver (one per group) for the 2026 European Learning & Teaching Forum.

Those interested in taking up this role are invited to express their interest as part of the application.

5. Eligibility

The call is open to all [EUA member universities](#), represented by a vice-rector, deputy vice-chancellor or another person in a senior position with responsibilities in learning and teaching at the university. Each university should ideally be represented by at least two staff members, to ensure availability of at least one representative across all meetings. Participating universities are also welcome to include student perspectives in the groups' work, for example by inviting students to join group meetings or consulting students in-between meetings.

Each university is invited to send up to two representatives to the group meetings. Students do not count towards this maximum number.

6. Selection criteria

The selection of group members will be done primarily on the basis of the motivation of the university and prior experience in the selected theme, as demonstrated in the application. In addition, the following aspects will be considered:

- geographical diversity;
- balance of institutional profiles (e.g. multi-faculty, specialised);
- engagement of student representatives.

In case of strong competition for participation in a TPG, preference will be given to institutions that have previously not taken part in a group. This is to ensure inclusiveness in EUA's Learning & Teaching activities.

Each university can submit only one application and participate in only one of the groups. Applicants are thus invited to indicate up to two themes in order of priority.

7. Terms and conditions for participation

There is no participation fee. However, universities will participate on a self-funding basis and are responsible for organising and covering their own travel and accommodation for the physical group meeting(s) and the final workshop. EUA will cover the costs of joint meals (lunches, coffee breaks, and dinners) during the meetings.

Universities interested in participating in the Thematic Peer Groups are invited to fill in the [online application form](#) by **17 January 2025**. Applicants will be informed in late February whether their application has been successful. For further questions, please contact Helene Peterbauer (helene.peterbauer@eua.eu).

In case of technical issues with the application form, please contact Tania Durt (tania.durt@eua.eu).

About EUA

The [European University Association \(EUA\)](#) represents more than 850 universities and national rectors' conferences in 49 European countries. EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies on higher education, research and innovation. Through continuous interaction with a range of other European and international organisations, EUA ensures that the independent voice of European universities is heard.

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