



JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

EU advocacy and lobbying in Higher Education: Current State and Future Opportunities

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Workshop Objectives



01

Explore how HEIs can influence EU research and innovation (R&I) policies

02

Share insights from the University of Jyväskylä's advocacy process

03

Discuss current methods and organizational strategies

04

Facilitate networking and exchange of best practices

Why Engage at the EU Level?

- **Access to Funding:** Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, etc.
- **Policy Influence:** Shape R&I priorities and frameworks
- **Strategic Visibility:** Positioning in European networks
- **Collaboration Opportunities:** Partnerships across borders



Background



Jaana Backman: Suomalaisten yliopistojen EU TKI –yhteistyön vahvistaminen, 2024

- According to the report HEIs want to have more collaboration reagrds EU RDI advocacy with:
 - companies, VTT, AKVA, SYL, EK, SITRA, and Research institutions (FMI, SCS, LUKE, SYKE, THL)
- In Brussels the network includes:
 - EUA, UNILION, LERU, COIMBRA, YERUN, EASSH, EARMA and university Alliances, reginal EU offices Partnerships, ESFRI, FILI, ERRIN, NORDIC FIKA etc.
- Seven out of eleven universities (HY, AALTO, LUT, OY, TY+ÅA, UEF) has dedicated personell and four (HANKEN, JY, TAY, LY) don't. Many have at least shared office possibility at Brussels.

What could be achieved



- *“Successful collaboration among Finnish universities in Brussels could provide ... added value to the work already being done. Increasing the capacity of universities through cooperation would benefit everyone, and the possibility of a unified voice would be strengthened. Greater understanding of EU affairs would also enhance the diversity of messages.” Backman 2024*

Report suggests:

- Let's define the concept of EU RDI advocacy
- Strengthening university leadership's EU RDI capabilities
- Strengthening universities' internal competence capacity.
- Clarifying the management of EU affairs in universities.
- **Increasing universities' direct EU RDI advocacy.**
- **Establishing structured practices for universities' EU RDI collaboration in Brussels**
- **Establishing shared premises for universities in Brussels.**
- Clarifying Unifi's role in inter-university EU RDI collaboration

Collaboration

University of Jyväskylä's Approach



Long-Term Actions

- Initiate the development of the University of Jyväskylä's EU advocacy model
- Identify key actors and experts within the university
- Define the university's target state for advocacy work
- Identify the most relevant partners and networks nationally and at the EU level in relation to the target state
- Assess the necessary resources

Pilot: Networking funding from the Vice Rector for Partnerships

- Allocate resources to support researchers' networking and integration into European networks across sectoral boundaries.
 - **Pilot call 2025:** €5,000–10,000 per application, up to 10 applications.
Funding is intended for network membership fees and travel costs.
 - **Goal:** To support researchers' integration into European partnerships, through which one-third of Pillar II funding is channeled.

Instructions for Group Work

Select a secretary to collect key points from your discussion in the PowerPoint template.

Discuss each question for approximately 5 minutes.

Prepare to present your group's key findings to the workshop participants.



1. Current Practices:



What kinds of EU advocacy models and practices currently exist in your institution? What works well, and what could be improved?

- Resources, dedicated person(s) in Brussels and remote. Internal communication should be improved. Interorganisational communication should be systematic
- Universities (4) in Turku pay salaries for one Brussel contact person together. He is located in Turku / Brussels. He organizes events, events, keeps informed about fundings etc all institutional contacts. Very active and also activating researchers
- Own consult in Brussels and supporting personnel in local institution.
- Regional Brussel office which organizes events and very specified visits to Brussels, keeps informed and helps with fundings
- Through very active European University Alliances
- UAS4Euorope, Eurashe, Arenen EU-erityisasiantuntija ja vaikuttavuustiimi
- Tieteenala/toimialaverkostot Brysselissä (tutkimuslaitos)
- Suora vaikuttaminen Brysseliin (tapaamisia, tilaisuuksia). Ei pidä unohtaa kansallista EU-vaikuttamista
- Eurooppalaiset yliopistoallianssit – vaikuttaminen sitä kautta (rahoitushakemusten myötä myös). Allianssilta selkeä tehtävänanto ja se on valjastettu edunvalvontaan
- Yliopiston HR-politiikka voi olla myös EU-vaikuttamista ja edunvalvontaa!!
- Erasmus pilot fundings

2. Strategic Fit:



- **What kind of EU-level advocacy best serves the strategic goals of universities?**
- well planned and implemented, strategical policy level but also we need researchers on board, closer to the programmes. Influencing to contents of the programmes. KIPs.
- HY:llä edunvalvonnan toimintamalli: jaettu yo-tasolle ja TDK-tasolle
- **EU matters should be integrated in different levels of decision making** at the research organisations
- Expertism on EU-matters should be promoted more strongly
- EU-funding should not be goal for EU-advocacy. Funding is a tool. Role of EU-experts work on different levels of strategic goals.

3. National Collaboration:



-How could national-level collaboration among Finnish universities be developed differently to better support EU advocacy? What concrete actions could be taken?

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- -Could funding organisations and ministers support, more resources to NCPs etc. (we know its difficult).could we share more when we are in brussels and organise more together in Brussels.
- Collaboration and joint actions + message in certain fields (e.g. Food sector) combining all RDI organizations (HEI's and research institutes) + e.g companies and regional developers
- FUniBru should be open also to Universities of Applied Sciences
- Unifin uudelleenjärjestely (EU ihminen pitää olla erikseen)
- yhteistyö Tulenat, Arene, Unifi
- Yhteisiä tilaisuuksia

4. Capacity Building:



How and to which target groups could awareness and competence in EU advocacy be increased?

- Right DGs in the Commission who write programmes, programme committees, and researchers.
- In all levels in the organization, field knowledge may be in many levels
- Funding support
- SMEs, Cities etc. planning or doing RDI
- Tutkijat!! Verkostojen kautta, lähetetään tutkijat oikeisiin pöytiin keskustelemaan
- Asiantuntijaryhmiin osallistuminen
- Johto – jotta ymmärtää, mitä EU:ssa tapahtuu, osaa priorisoida ja innostaa omaa yhteisöä
- Palveluiden kollegat myös – osaavat antaa kommentteja/syötteitä EU-lausuntoihin, haluihin liittyen (esim EU strategiat)

5. Researcher Support



What kind of support and expertise do researchers need to deepen their engagement with European networks?

- Encouraging is not really enough, researchers training should involve EU advocacy and needs to be taken into account in their career prospects and job descriptions. Resources to travel.
- Researchers are not salesmen therefore they need very strong encouragement and leaders to understand their role in different EU networks
- Working e.g. in European Universities developing long-term co-operation with very committed partners who all want to advocate and support European competitiveness
- Mentorointi nuorille tutkijoille, koulusta, TIE TOA!!! Projektinhallintaosaamista.