

# **YUFERING Project**

## **YUFE TRANSFORMING R&I THROUGH EUROPE-WIDE KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER**



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## **D 2.4: Report on expert best practice and testbed meetings/workshops**

**February 2024**



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## List of Abbreviations and Definitions

CERI	Community Engaged Research and Innovation
ILO	Inteded Learning Outcome
UAntwerpen	University of Antwerp
UBremen	University of Bremen
UC3M	Universidad Carlos III De Madrid
UCY	University of Cyprus
UEF	University of Eastern Finland
UEssex	University of Essex
UM	Maastricht University
UMK	Nicolaus Copernicus University
UNIRI	University of Rijeka
USN	Université Sorbonne Nouvelle
YUFE	Young Universities for the Future of Europe

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# Introduction

## Aim of Task 2.4

The primary goal of work package 2 of the YUFERING Project is to create and implement a **community-engagement-based research & innovation** (CERI) approach across “Young Universities for the Future of Europe” (YUFE) Alliance, designed to be a scalable, efficient, and influential blueprint for a European University. Within this framework, task 2.4 focused on skills training for researchers and research support staff. YUFERING developed training programs aimed at continuous professional development, and alternated between sharing best practices and workshops that function as a test bed and training option for researchers.

The work on this task is structured in sub-tasks as follows:

1. Develop a training program on community-engagement based research & innovation for researchers and research support staff.
2. Organize 10 expert best practice’ and ‘test bed’ meetings/workshops for researchers & research support staff on community-engaged research (sessions on community-engaged research in line with the results from task 2.1.3 and task 2.1.4).
3. Organize a conference on community-engaged research, for researchers, citizens, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders.
4. Develop a format for a newsletter on YUFE community-engaged research for researchers and support staff and a format for citizens and entrepreneurs and distribute through the YUFE virtual campus.
5. Integrate social media updates on community-engagement based research & innovation into the YUFE social media strategy.

Key to task 2.4 is the integration of insights from other tasks into these training programs, particularly centered around CERI. For instance, task 2.1's work on mapping CERI and developing a framework of success factors and challenges directly feeds into task 2.4's workshops. Similarly, the findings from task 2.2's survey on support policies, structures, and decision-making processes are also incorporated, enriching the content and structure of the workshops.

## Strategy for achieving objectives

To develop a comprehensive training program/conference on CERI (tasks 2.4.1 and 2.4.3), we integrated all the tasks described above. We initiated our process by identifying the existing expertise within the various YUFE partner universities. First, ten workshops were held on CERI (task 2.4.2). In these workshops, we experimented with various approaches to optimize engagement and effectiveness. This experimentation included targeting different audience groups, covering a spectrum of topics relevant to CERI, and employing diverse workshop formats. The objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of these different strategies in the context of the participating universities' specific needs and capabilities.



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The workshops were disseminated through the YUFE newsletter (task 2.4.4) and YUFE social media platforms (task 2.4.5) to increase awareness and participation in CERI. After the workshops took place, the workshops were evaluated by the participants and these evaluations are described in the current report. This report will form the base for the planning of the training program/conference on community-engaged research (tasks 2.4.1 and 2.4.3). The overall aim was to identify the added value of YUFE in community engaged research over current existing workshops within each university.

## The workshops

Our workshops focused on the implementation and dissemination of different areas of CERI. We covered different aspects, that all focus on the interplay between the international governing bodies (EU), national governing bodies, universities, industries and the general community/civilians (*Figure 1*). Each workshop featured a distinct format, tailored to its respective topic. In order to reach many people, we opted to utilize an online platform for the workshops. With the different formats and topics, we aim to shed light on multiple aspects of community engaged research (*Table 1*).

Workshop 1 and workshop 2, conducted in 2021 and 2022 respectively, were organized by various members of Maastricht University. Starting from 2023, the authors of this report took over the leadership of task WP2.4. Consequently, the nature of the data available from the first two workshops was different than the data obtained from these initial two workshops differed from that obtained from the subsequent workshops beginning in 2023. Following the third workshop, we introduced a registration documentation system that was first applied for the fourth workshop by us (however, this was also done for the second workshop by the other organizers). In this registration documentation, we asked the participants for their function and their affiliation, while complying with European and National data protection regulations. We anonymized the data, analyzed these details, and the findings are presented in this report.

Moreover, following the fifth workshop, we distributed online evaluation forms to all participants to assess the workshop's effectiveness. In this evaluation, attendees were requested to provide further information about their role and affiliation. Additionally, they were asked to give feedback on the workshop's format of the workshop, assess its overall quality and to evaluate its link to CERI.

The insights gained from these evaluations, combined with our experiences in organizing the workshops, formed the basis for our proposal for a conference/training program. This proposal is detailed in Section 3.1, 'Future Outlooks', of the report.



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Figure 1 Interconnection workshops on community engaged research and innovation<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Workshops are within the interplay between international governing bodies (EU), national governing bodies, universities, industries and the general community/civilians.



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Table 1 Overview of the conducted workshops

Workshop title	Date	Organizers	Target group	Location	Description workshop
<b>Workshop 1: Can academics be activists? – An open discussion</b>	07-12-2021	Prof. Pim Martens (Maastricht University) Prof. Maurice Zeegers (Maastricht University) Dr. Astrid Offermans (Maastricht University)	Researchers and research staff	Online	<p><b>Intended learning outcome (ILO): To develop the ability to critically evaluate the relationship between activism and objectivity in scientific research, and understand the ethical implications of integrating personal views into CERI.</b></p> <p>Many researchers who work in the field of community-engaged research, experience a tension between being objective researchers and a desire for activism. While some are convinced that activism is a core task of the researcher, others may struggle to filter their personal views out of scientific analysis. Some may argue that activism in science should be rewarded by the university, while others may argue that mixing activism and science is unethical.</p> <p>During this event, different positions on the topic were presented and afterwards there was an interactive discussion.</p>
<b>Workshop 2: Involving non-academic actors in research climate-related food risks</b>	07-06-2022	Prof. Wiebe Bijker (Maastricht University) Prof. Dr. Mitchel Kiefer (Maastricht University)	Researchers and research staff	On site/ online hybrid	<p><b>ILO: To gain the ability to effectively collaborate with academic and governmental actors in CERI, specifically in the context of climate-related flood risks.</b></p> <p>For this community engaged research workshop, two Maastricht University researchers, Wiebe Bijker, professor of Technology and Society and Mitchell Kiefer, Lecturer with a PhD in Sociology, were invited to discuss an example of involving academic and governmental actors in research on climate-related flood risks</p>
<b>Workshop 3: Making Festivals: A workshop on creating, running and evaluating</b>	24-04-2023	Dr. Gary Kerr (Edinburgh Napier University Business School)	Researchers, research staff, general public	Online (Zoom)	<p><b>ILO: To gain the knowledge to plan and execute scientific festivals.</b></p> <p>In this workshop, professional festival's consultant and research communicator Dr. Gary Kerr described how to organize scientific festivals. First, the participants explored what a festival is, and what it could be (at Maastricht University), using general ideas and specific examples. In addition, festivals were considered in the context of local and international communities</p>



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<b>festivals at Universities</b>					(including partners, performers/presenters and audiences). Lastly, the participants explored specific questions people have in running or planning festivals in a clinic style setting.
<b>Workshop 4: How to start a business from scratch?</b>	26-6-2023	Dr. Wilfred Germeraad (CiMaas/ Maastricht University)	Early career researchers, researchers interested to start a company based on research ideas.	Online (Zoom)	<p><b>ILO: To acquire skills to transform a biomedical research idea into a viable business venture.</b></p> <p>The workshop focused on the process of turning biomedical research ideas into successful companies. Attendees were encouraged to think about how their own research could be translated into a viable business concept. The speaker shared his own experiences and insights on what it takes to start and grow a successful business, highlighting the need for persistence, adaptability, and collaboration.</p>
<b>Workshop 5: Unlocking the Hidden Value: The Art of Valorization</b>	07-09-2023	Patric Machiels (Brightlands)  Dr. Stephan Peters (Brightlands)	Researchers and research staff	Online (Zoom)	<p><b>ILO: To become proficient in applying strategies and tools for valorizing research.</b></p> <p>Research valorization is the process of transforming academic research into valuable societal and economic outcomes. This workshop explored different strategies and tools for researchers to effectively communicate and disseminate research findings to relevant stakeholders, and ultimately achieve maximum impact and value. Participants learned how to identify and leverage the potential impact of their research, as well as how to navigate the complex landscape of funding opportunities and commercialization pathways. Through case studies and interactive activities, this workshop equipped researchers with the skills and knowledge to effectively valorize their research and drive positive change.</p>
<b>Workshop 6: Circular economy: The future of sustainable living</b>	06-11-2023	Emilia Califano (Province Limburg),  Lorna James (Maastricht University)  Deanna Han (Circular X project, Maastricht)	Researchers and research staff	Online (Zoom)	<p><b>ILO: To develop a comprehensive understanding of circular economy, including its relationship with sustainability.</b></p> <p>A circular economy is an economic system designed to minimize waste and make the most of resources by promoting the continual use, recycling, and regeneration of materials. In this workshop, participants delved into the link between sustainability and the circular economy, grasped the concept of circular supply chains, examined the role of circular economy as a</p>



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		Sustainability Institute)  Laura Niessen (Circular X project, Maastricht Sustainability Institute)			policy strategy, gained insights into innovations and practices in the Global South, and enhanced their understanding through an interactive quiz.
<b>Workshop 7: Community engaged research and innovation (CERI) &amp; Participatory Research Architecture: Values and Key Principles</b>	17-11-2023	Dr. Bojana Culum Ilic (University of Rijeka)	(Early career) researchers	Online (Zoom)	<b>ILO: To gain understanding of participatory research and to apply the principles of participatory research.</b>  This workshop focused on participatory research and its principles. The first topic discussed various forms of participatory research, including their characteristics and advantages. The second topic explored the philosophy behind participatory research and its principles. The third topic focused on the research architecture of facts versus the architecture of concern, highlighting the importance of recognizing and addressing the values, concerns, and experiences of research participants. The fourth topic discussed the drivers behind participatory research, including translating knowledge into action, social justice, and self-determination. The fifth topic presented the six participatory research principles: building trust, participation, collaboration, empowerment, constructing and sharing knowledge, and social change. These principles were discussed in detail. Overall, the workshop provided valuable insights into the principles and practices of participatory research, emphasizing the need for collaboration, empowerment, and social change in research processes.
<b>Workshop 8: Boosting community engaged research and innovation (CERI) &amp; Participatory</b>	01-12-2023	Dr. Bojana Culum Ilic (University of Rijeka)	(Early career) researchers	Online (Zoom)	<b>ILO: To gain the ability to assess and enhance trustworthiness of participatory research.</b>  This research focused on participatory research trustworthiness. First, studies and data were shown of stories and power. Second, the “Fighting” over and for the scientific ideal of objectivity was discussed. Thirdly, the importance of methodological rigor was explored. Next, the



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<b>Research Trustworthiness</b>					trustworthiness as a measure was presented. Fifthly, crucial bias threats for trustworthiness were explored. Lastly six strategies to boost CERI research trustworthiness were discussed.
<b>Workshop 9: Entrepreneurial Edge Workshop: Ignite Your Competence using the EntreComp Framework</b>	13-12-2023	Honorata Fajga-Żurańska (Nicolaus Copernicus University)	(Early career) researchers	Online (Zoom)	<p><b>ILO: To gain an introduction to entrepreneurship and develop practical skills in key competences for entrepreneurial success.</b></p> <p>Honorata Fajga-Zuranska led an immersive workshop on the European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework – EntreComp, unlocking participants' potential and shaping a future of innovation. Attendees dived into the 15 competences that define an entrepreneurial mindset, discovered practical applications for creating financial, cultural, and social value, engaged in interactive sessions and group activities, and explored case studies of successful entrepreneurial integration</p>
<b>Workshop 10: Structural Adjustment for 21st Century Resilience: Transforming the Democratic Republic of Congo Economy</b>	19-02-2024	Cyriac Lusilu (Humanitarian and Social Philanthropist for DR Congo)	Researchers and research support staff	Online (Zoom)	<p><b>ILO: To obtain knowledge about CERI methods to address the economic challenges in the Democratic Republic of Congo,</b></p> <p>This workshop was held to address the economic challenges of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the 21st century. Participants discovered tailored strategies for building a resilient economy through structural adjustments, inclusive development, and strategic use of technology. The workshop included discussions on global shifts affecting the DRC, policies for economic diversification and competitiveness, initiatives for inclusive development, and leveraging technology for growth. Attendees engaged in fostering international collaborations and trade partnerships and participated in interactive sessions to apply practical solutions, contributing to the transformative dialogue shaping the DRC's economic future.</p>



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## Section 1: Methodology

Workshops 1 and 2 were organized by different members of Maastricht University. From 2023 onwards, the writers of the current report took over the lead of task 2.4. For the first two workshop therefore, the information is different and more limited, than for the other eight workshops.

In this report, we adopt the definition of CERI established in WP2, specifically task 2.1 (Culum Ilic, 2021). According to this definition, *“CERI is an approach where scientists and various societal and/or business actors (e.g. industry, government, public and social organizations, underserved and underrepresented communities, lay citizens) work together at local/regional/national/international level in an iterative process to co-create new knowledge and/or products/services and/or understanding in response to community's needs coupled with feedback loops and social/market linkages (innovation). The new knowledge and/or products/services and/or understanding should later be used to attain positive (social) change in the community”*.

Community-engaged research and innovation is a participatory form of R&I that has following attributes:

- Intends to have a social impact by deploying strategic research and its innovative outcomes to better understand, address and contribute to resolving societal challenges.
- Actively involves affected community partners (non-academic communities) in one or more phases of the research and innovation process in a way that is mutually beneficial.
- Facilitates efforts to encourage the implementation of the research outcomes and innovative solutions with the relevant communities
- Intends to build trusting bi-directional relationships between researchers and community partners that take into consideration all partners' perspectives in defining research foci and the innovation strategies.(Culum Ilic, 2021)

### Section 1.1: Dissemination and registrations

Prior to workshop 2 and to workshop 4-10, we disseminated the workshops through the YUFE channels, including social media platforms (Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter), the YUFE website, the YUFE events page and from workshop 6 onwards the YUFE newsletter and the YUFE virtual campus. Additionally, Maastricht University's internal communication platform “UMployee” was utilized for local dissemination (Figure 2).

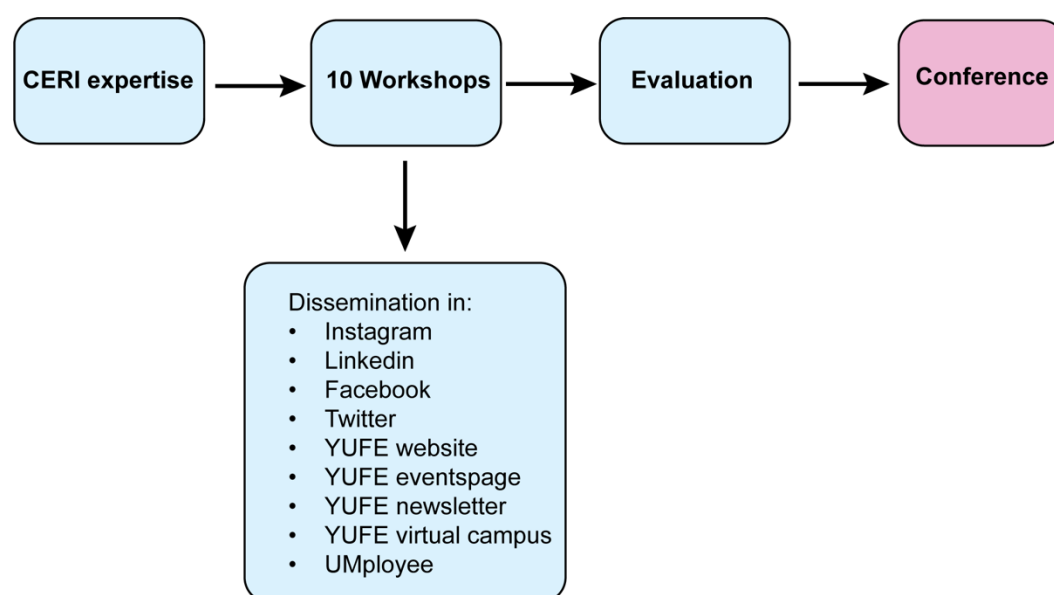
Interested individuals could register themselves through an online registration form. In this registration form, they provided details about their function and affiliation (while complying to the European and National data protection regulations). The “function” category included several options: “unknown”, “researcher”, “research assistant”, “student” or “other”. If a participant did not specify their function, it was classified as “unknown”. The 'researcher' category encompassed: (students), PhD students, postdocs, senior researchers, professors, and lecturers. For the category “research



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assistant”, we included registrants that filled in to be research technician, support staff, and employees in grant offices or financial departments of universities. For the category “student”, we included registrants who were master or bachelor students. Although we had a distinct category for students, we classify them as early career researchers, as our definition of researcher spans from students to professors. Lastly, any other specified roles were categorized as “other”, which included, for example, individuals employed in the private sector. All participants gave consent for data storage, and all collected data was subsequently anonymized. All participant-related information was deleted after anonymization to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

The data from these registration forms was analyzed and is presented in the current report (see section 3.1). Besides the number of registrants, the number of actual attendees was collected. Additionally, the functions of all registrants, as previously defined, were analyzed along with their affiliation to the various YUFE partner universities.



**Figure 2 Task 2.4 Methodological Workflow**

## Section 1.2: Evaluation

Following the completion of the workshops, we distributed an online evaluation form, created by “Qualtrics”, to the attendees (Figure 2). We first sent this evaluation to the attendees of workshop 3 and 4. However, due to the low attendance at the workshops, we did not receive any responses to the evaluation forms. Starting from workshop 5 onwards, we received responses to our evaluation forms.

The data collected through the Qualtrics program encompassing various aspects, which we then analyzed using the same software. The questionnaire began by asking participants whether they consented to participate in the evaluation.. Furthermore, it included questions about the participants’ occupation and affiliation. For the questionnaire, we decided to further specify our target audience, and we divided the “function” category in: “bachelor student”, “master student”, “PhD student”, “postdoc



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researcher”, “senior researcher”, “research assistant”, “professor”, “other”. In this context, the term “professor” encompasses: assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor. Additionally, the questionnaire asked for feedback on the workshops, including participant’s evaluation of the sessions. Another key aspect of the questionnaire was to ascertain whether the attendees were able to link CERl to their own research as a result of the workshop. All participant-related collected data were made anonymous and subsequently deleted to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

Details of the questions and the provided response options can be found in *Appendix 1*.

Based on the results of the questionnaire, and based on our experiences while organizing the workshops, we formulated a proposal for an optimal conference/training program about CERl.

## Section 2: Results

A sequence of ten workshops took place from July 2021 until February 2024. In 2023, we initiated the distribution of registration and evaluation forms to our workshop participants. These forms yielded insights into participant demographics, the effectiveness of our outreach efforts, and the overall quality of our workshops. Armed with these insights, we can now project trends for future workshops and determine the most effective best practices to employ.

For the current results section, first the registration process will be analyzed. Subsequently, the workshops will be analyzed and evaluated.

### Section 2.1: Registration participants analysis

Individuals interested in the workshops were able to register through an online form. This process enabled us to collect data on the registrants. Analysis revealed that workshop 2 experienced the highest registration, with all registrants attending (100% attendance rate), (*Figure 3, part A*). In contrast, workshop 4 had the lowest attendance rate, with only 13% of those registered actually participating. We attributed this low turnout to the absence of an Outlook calendar invite and time zone differences, which resulted in some participants joining an hour late. From workshop 5 onwards, we began sending Outlook calendar invites, which significantly improved attendance rates; 50% of registrants participated in workshop 5. Overall, across all workshops, 57% of the total registrants were in actual attendance (*Figure 4, part A*).

Subsequently, we conducted an analysis of the registrants' functions. As previously mentioned, we classified these functions into several categories: “unknown”, “researcher”, “research assistant”, “student” or “other”. Despite, having a distinct category for students, we categorize them as early career researchers. The distribution of the registrant functions varied across the different workshops (*Figure 3, part B*). Workshops 4, 5 and 9 predominantly attracted researchers, aligning with the intended target audience. In contrast, workshops 6, 7, 8 and 10 saw a majority of student



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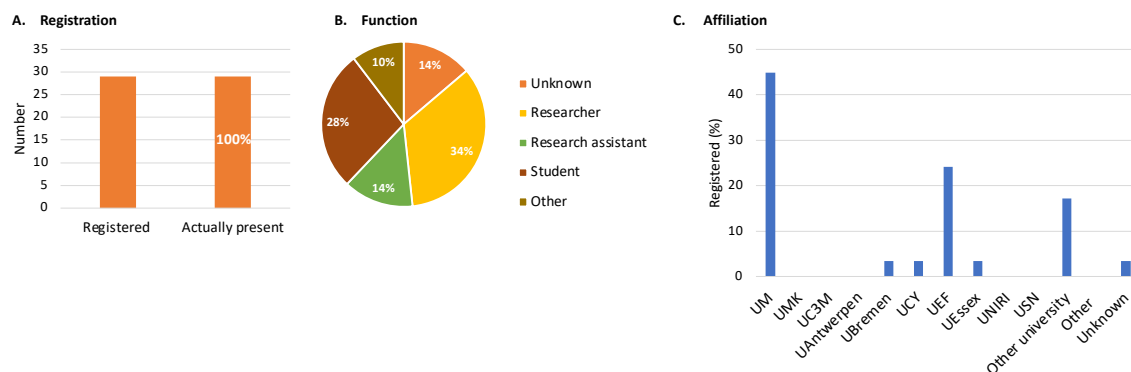
registrants. This high student turnout could be attributed to the popularity of topics such as circular economy and sustainability among the young communities (Ziesemer, Hüttel, & Balderjahn, 2021). Additionally, from this point forward, we expanded our dissemination efforts to include the workshops in the YUFE Virtual Campus. Overall, across all workshops, the predominant category of our registrants was “student”, accounting for 45%, followed by “researcher” at 38%, “other” at 8%, and finally “research assistant”, at 5% (and unknown 4%) (*Figure 4, part B*). The unexpectedly low registration of research support staff was disappointing, especially considering they were part of the intended target audience as defined in the proposal. However, we specified a different target audience for each workshop, and research support staff were not included in the target audience of all sessions (featuring in 6 out of 10 workshops).

Finally, we gathered data on the affiliation of the registrants. The diversity in affiliations varied across the different workshops (*Figure 3, part C*). Overall, the majority of the registrants was from the University of Eastern Finland, followed by Maastricht University (*Figure 4, part C*). Other universities, such as University of Antwerp and University of Essex had lower registration rates (less than 5%), indicating that our dissemination efforts did not effectively reach these universities.

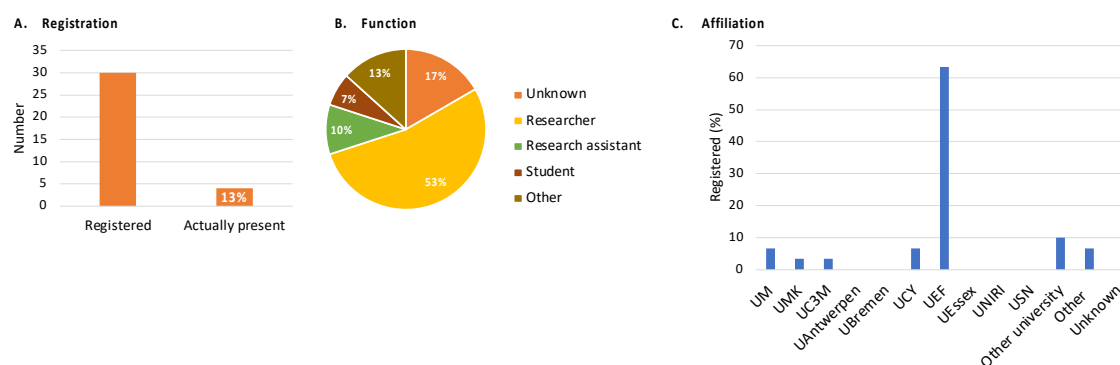


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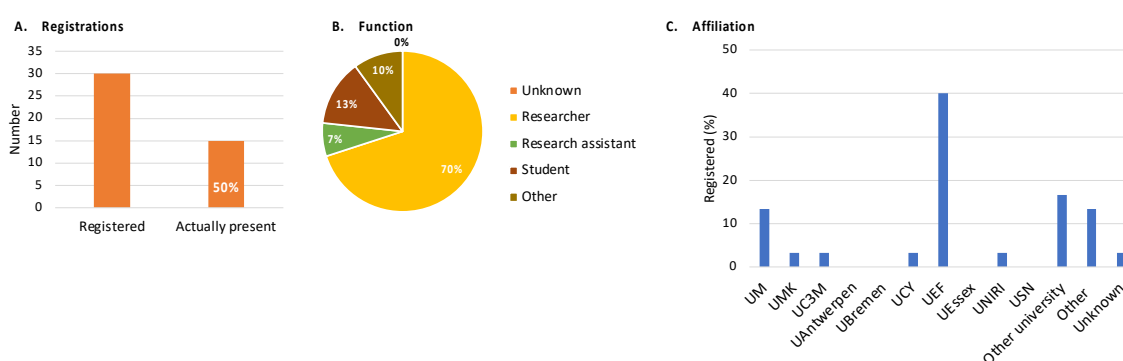
## Workshop 2: Involving non-academic actors in research climate-related food risks



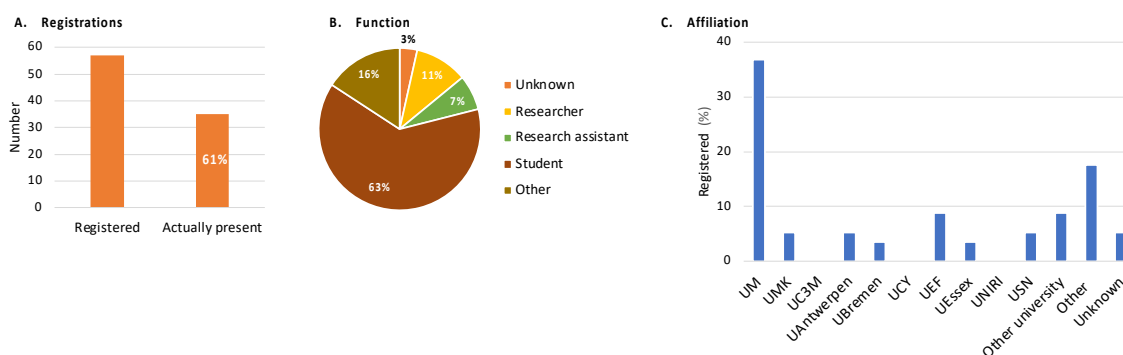
## Workshop 4: How to start a business from scratch?



## Workshop 5: Unlocking the Hidden Value: The Art of Valorization



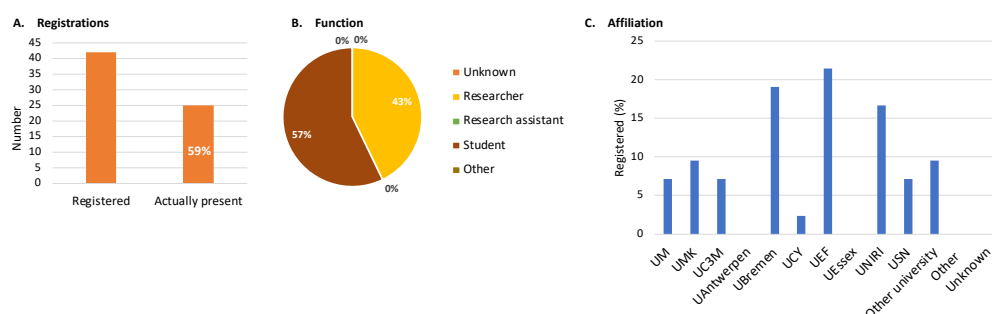
## Workshop 6: Circular economy: The future of sustainable living



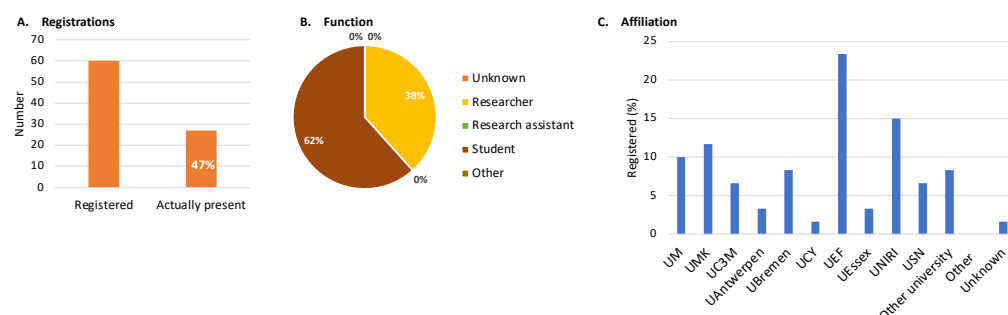
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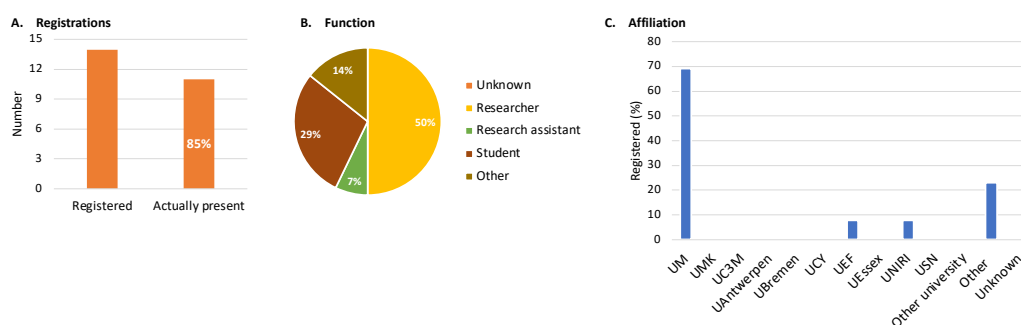
## Workshop 7: CERI & Participatory Research Architecture: Values and Key Principles



## Workshop 8: Boosting CERI & Participatory Research Trustworthiness



## Workshop 9: Entrepreneurial Edge Workshop, Ignite Your Competence using EntreComp Framework



## Workshop 10: Structural Adjustment for 21st Century Resilience: Transforming DCR Economy

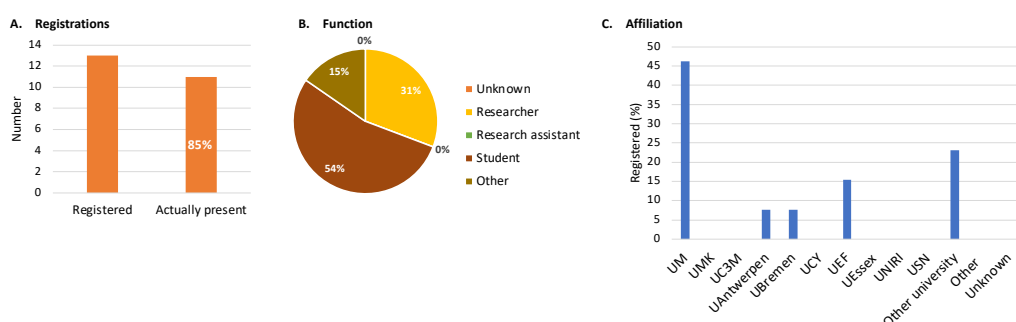


Figure 3 Participant registration overview for the ten workshops<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Participant registration data for the workshops, detailing (A) the number of registrants versus actual attendees, (B) their professional roles, and (C) their affiliations within the different YUFE partner universities. Note: to see the detailed distribution within the workshops, see Fig. 3.



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### All workshops combined

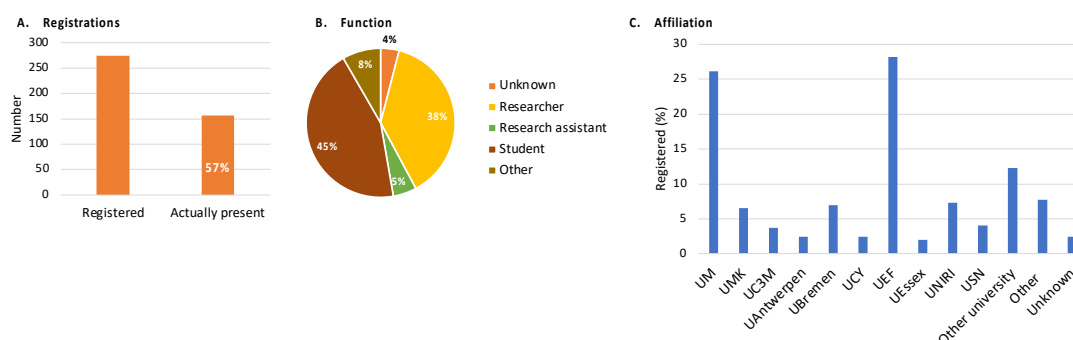


Figure 4 Overall participant registration for all the workshops combined<sup>3</sup>

## Section 2.2: Attendees analysis

Besides the registration data, we also collected the data from the people who actually attended the workshop and filled in the evaluation form.

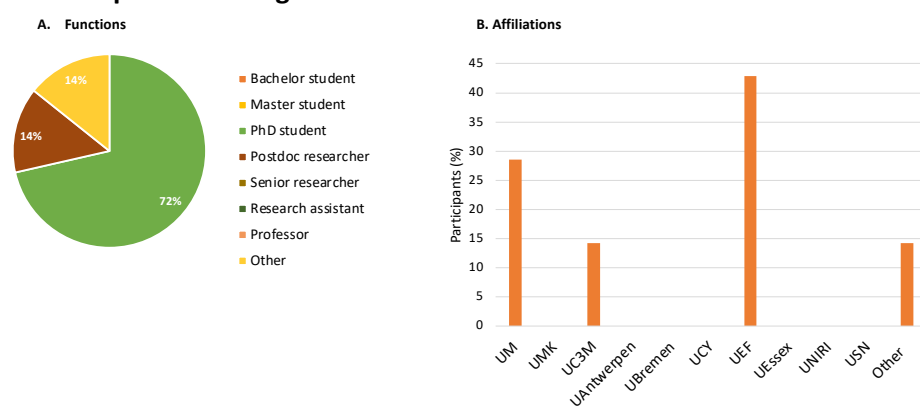
The functions of workshop attendees who completed the evaluation form varied widely. Workshop 5, for example, was predominantly evaluated by PhD students (72%), while workshop 6 was mainly evaluated by master students (50%), and bachelor students (22%) (Figure 5, part A). This distribution pattern mirrored the registration data, where the majority of workshop 5 registrants were researchers and workshop 6 registrants were students (see Figure 3, part B). Similarly, workshops 7, 8 and 9 were mainly attended and evaluated by students. Overall, among those who evaluated the workshops, master and bachelor students were the largest group (both 26%), followed by PhD students (17%), other (12%) and postdoc researchers (8%). Therefore, the portion of “students” (according to the registration classification) was also 52%, which corresponds to the percentage of students that registered for the workshops. The “researcher” category, which represented 33% of all the workshop evaluations, also corresponded to the proportion of registrants. Notably, only 3% of the evaluators were research support staff.

Subsequently, we also assessed the affiliations of attendees who provided evaluations for the workshops. This analysis revealed varying patterns of university affiliations across different workshops. Workshops 6, 7, and 8 showed a relatively even distribution of attendees from various universities. In contrast, workshops 5, 9 and 10 exhibited less diversity in attendee affiliations, with a predominance of participants from a limited number of institutes. Overall, the majority of the workshop attendees came from Maastricht University, University of Eastern Finland and Nicolaus Copernicus University. This pattern of distribution might suggest that the workshops were more effectively distributed among certain universities.

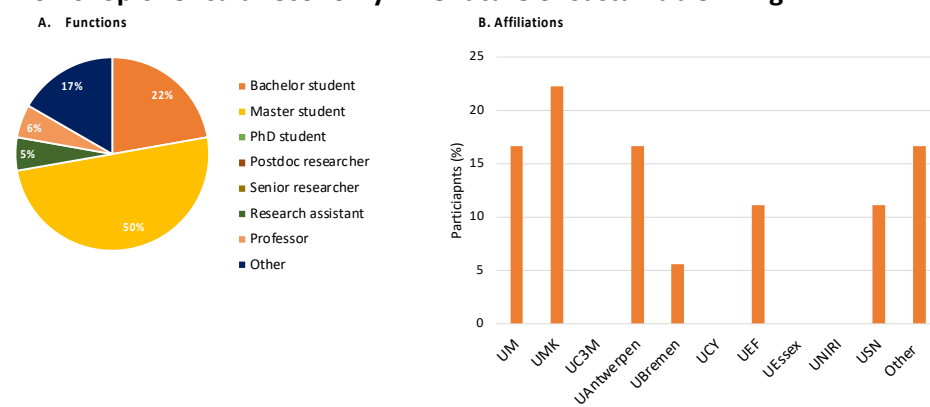
<sup>3</sup> The participant registration data of all the workshops combined, demonstrating the (A) number of registrants versus actual attendees, (B) their professional roles, and (C) their affiliation within the different YUFE partner organizations.



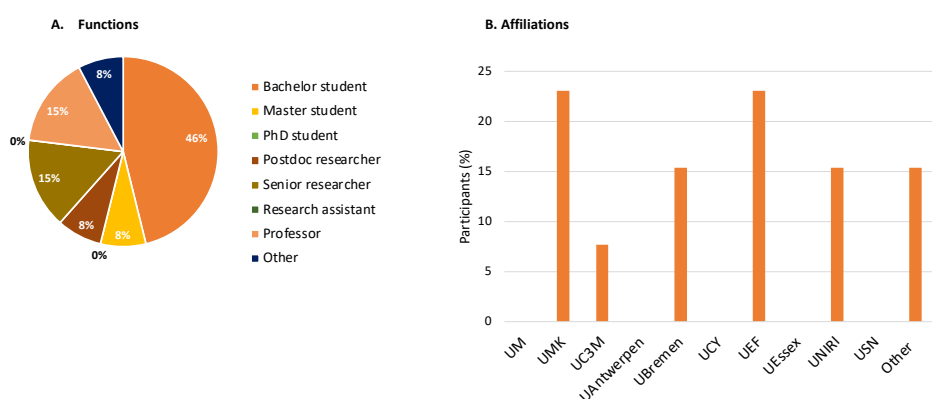
## Workshop 5: Unlocking the Hidden Value: The Art of Valorization



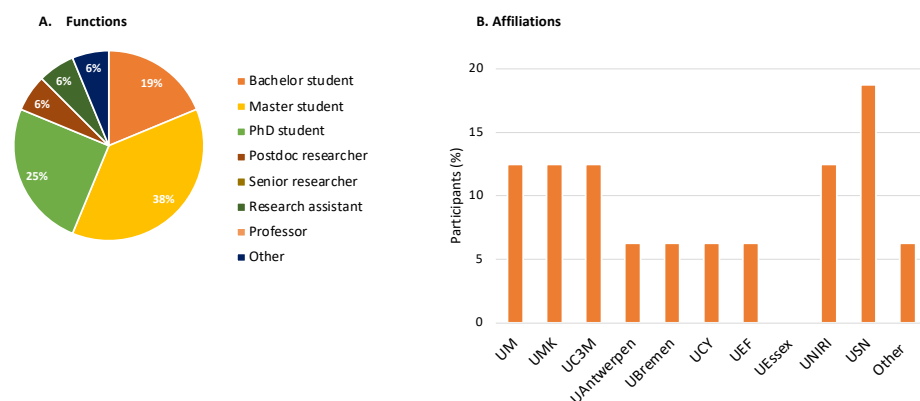
## Workshop 6: Circular economy: The future of sustainable living



## Workshop 7: CERI & Participatory Research Architecture: Values and Key Principles

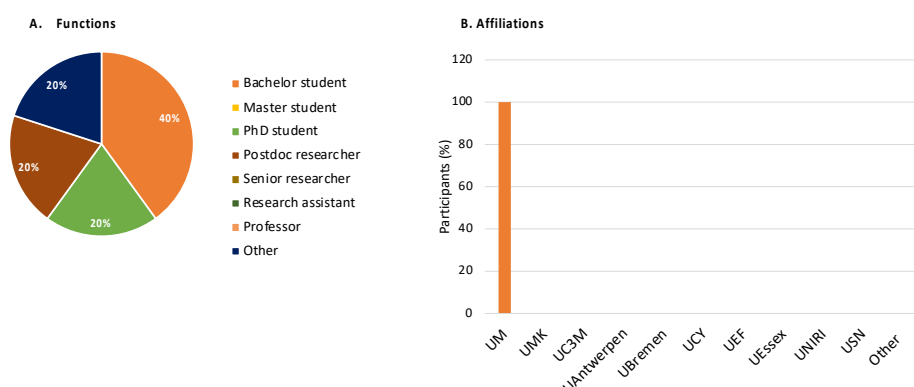


## Workshop 8: Boosting CERI & Participatory Research Trustworthiness



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## Workshop 9: Entrepreneurial Edge Workshop, Ignite Your Competence using EntreComp Framework



## Workshop 10: Structural Adjustment for 21st Century Resilience: Transforming DCR Economy

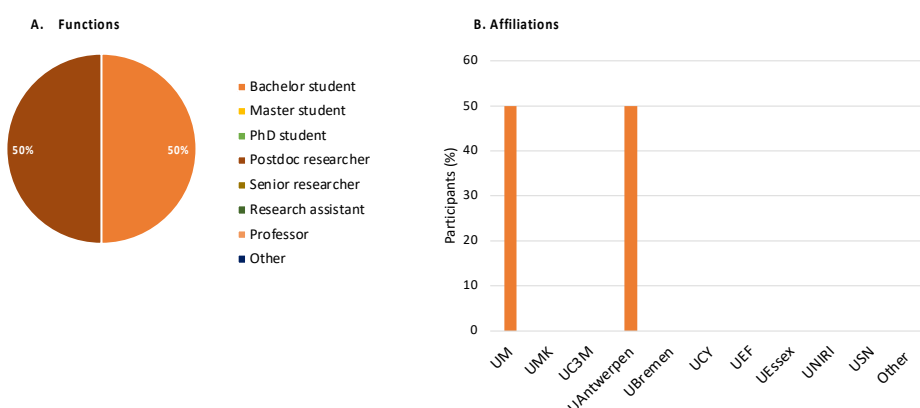


Figure 5 Attended participants who filled in the evaluation form overview for the workshops<sup>4</sup>

## All workshops combined

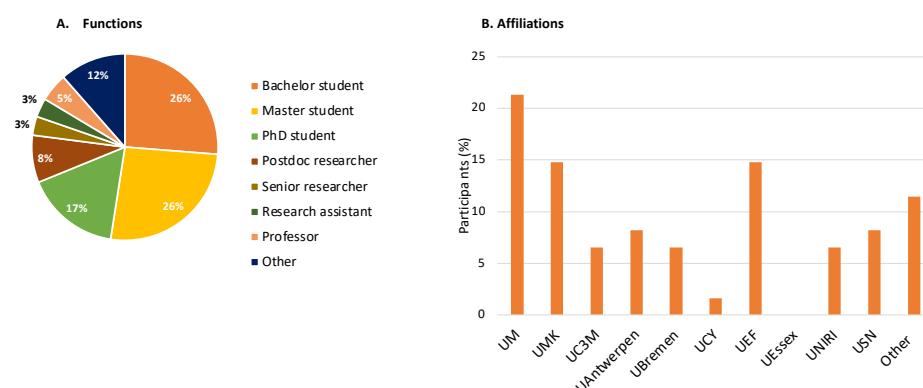


Figure 6 Overall attended participants who filled in evaluation form<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Attendees data for the workshops, detailing (A) their professional roles, and (B) their affiliations within the different YUFE partner organizations.

<sup>5</sup> The attendees data of all the workshops combined, demonstrating the (A) their professional roles, and (B) their affiliations within the different YUFE partner universities. Note: to see the detailed distribution within the workshops, see Fig.5.



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### Section 2.3: Evaluation of questionnaire

Starting from workshop 5, we started the distribution of an online evaluation questionnaire to the attendees. The questionnaire first evaluated the overall quality of each workshop. The feedback was predominantly positive, across all workshops, 43% of the participants reported being “extremely satisfied”, while 44% indicated they were “somewhat satisfied” (*Figure 7*). Only a small proportion (11%) expressed dissatisfaction with the workshops.

For evaluation per categories, subcategories such as "Communication and information prior to the start of the training," "Practical organization of the workshop," "Content delivery by the trainer(s)," "Training materials" , "Duration of the workshop," and "Added value to your career" were predominantly assessed as "above average" (*Figure 8*). However, networking opportunities received mainly average ratings, with a significant number of respondents also rating the workshop as "below average". While workshop 6-9 received mostly “average” or “above average” ratings for most of the subcategories, workshop 5 and 10 received “below average” for multiple subcategories.

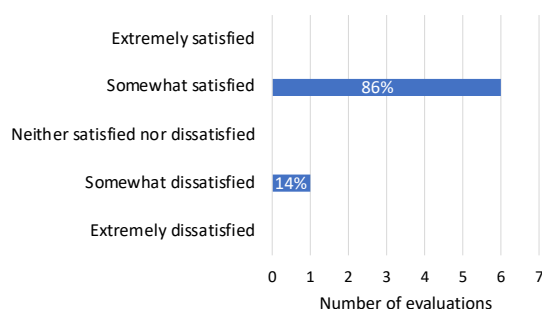
Moreover, the majority of participants perceived the workshops as engaging and interactive, (70% replied with “yes”, 27% replied with “somewhat”) (*Figure 9*). Nonetheless, there were noticeable variations among the workshops in terms of engagement and interactivity. For instance, workshop 9 received a 100% positive response rate for engagement and interactivity, while workshop 8 saw 40% of its evaluations indicating a lack of interaction and engagement.

Finally, we asked the participants about whether the workshop facilitated a connection between (their own) research and CERI (*Figure 10*). In total, 91% of attendees affirmed that the workshop was helpful in linking their research to CERI. Nonetheless, there were some variations in this regard. Workshops 7, 8,,9 and 10 each received a 100% affirmative response, whereas 43% of participants in workshop 5 and 14% in workshop 6 did not see a connection between the workshop content and their research.

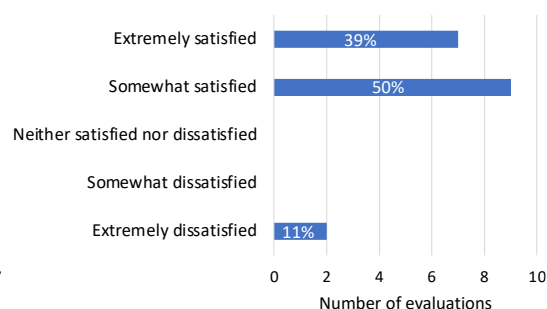


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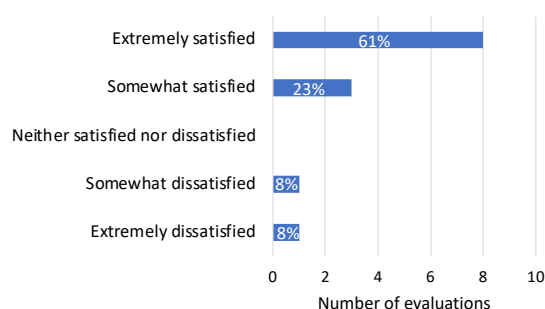
### Workshop 5



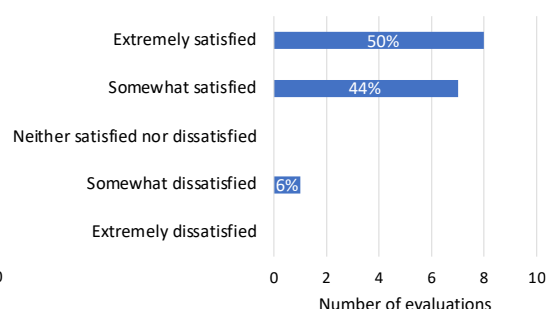
### Workshop 6



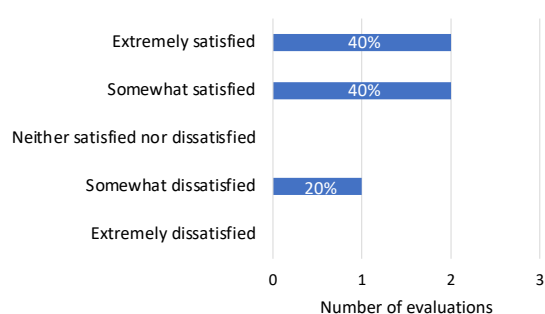
### Workshop 7



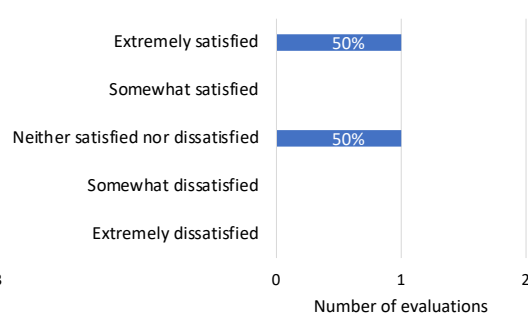
### Workshop 8



### Workshop 9



### Workshop 10



### Overall evaluation

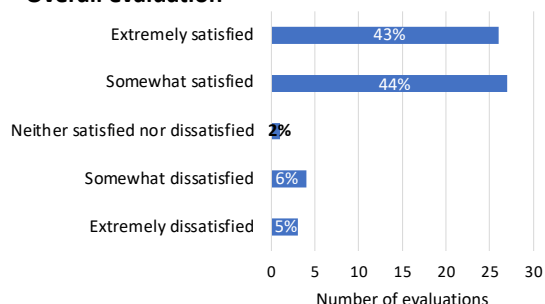
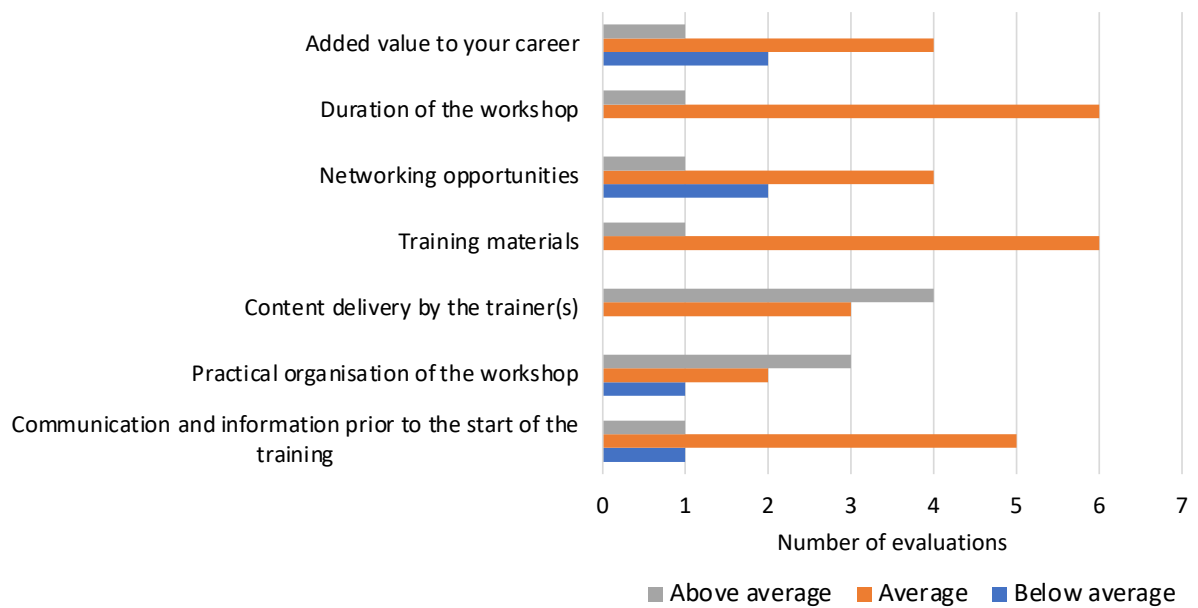


Figure 7 Overall evaluation workshops<sup>6</sup>

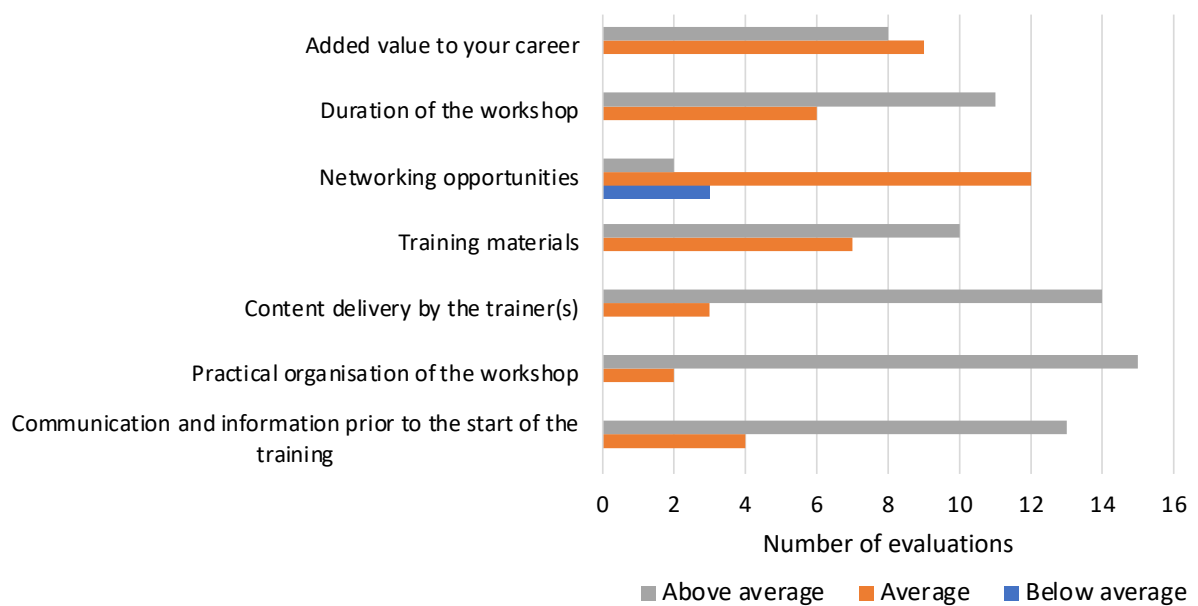
<sup>6</sup> Overall evaluation on the question: "Overall, how satisfied are you with your participation in your most recent workshop?". Evaluation is demonstrated per workshop.



## Workshop 5



## Workshop 6

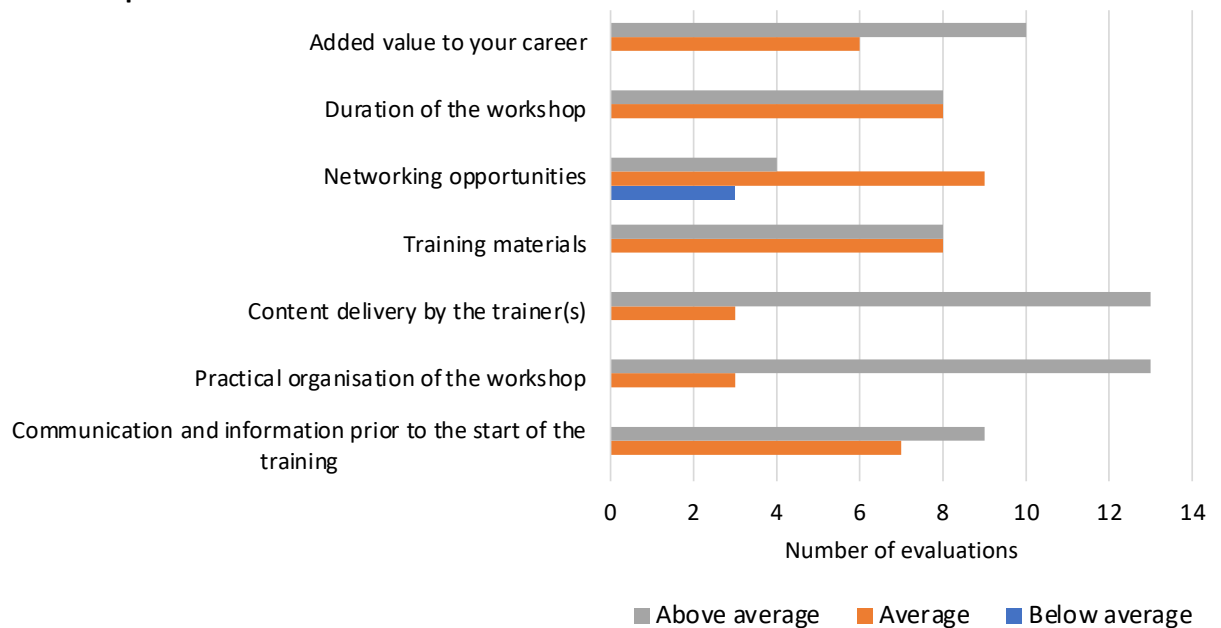


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## Workshop 7



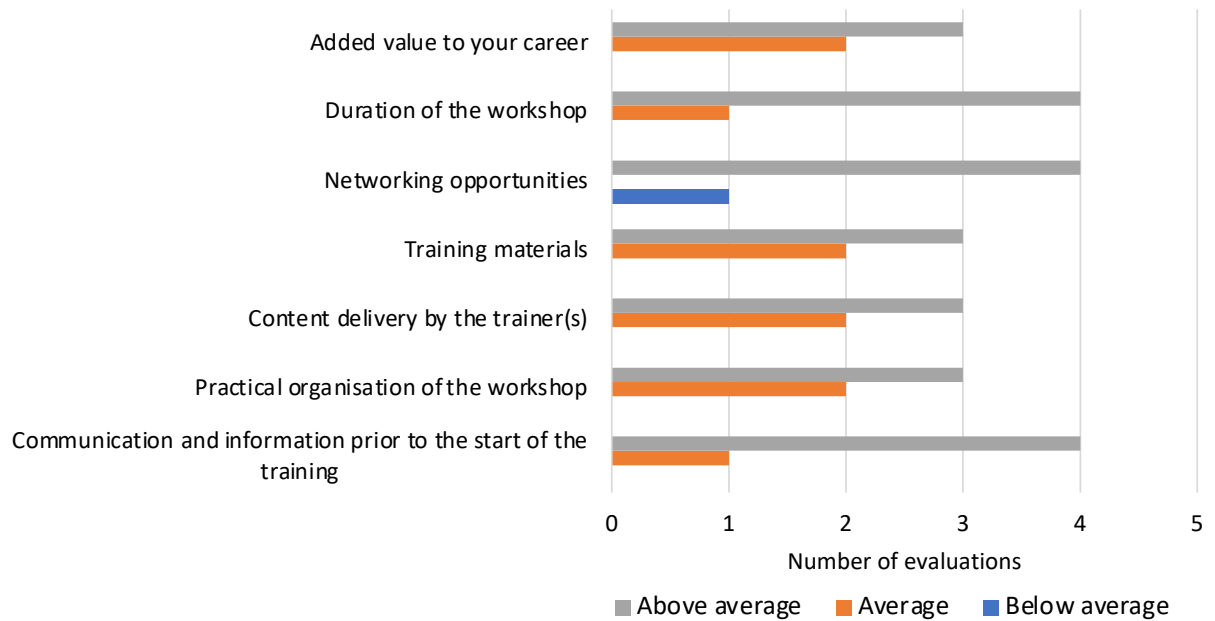
## Workshop 8



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## Workshop 9



## Workshop 10



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## Overall evaluation

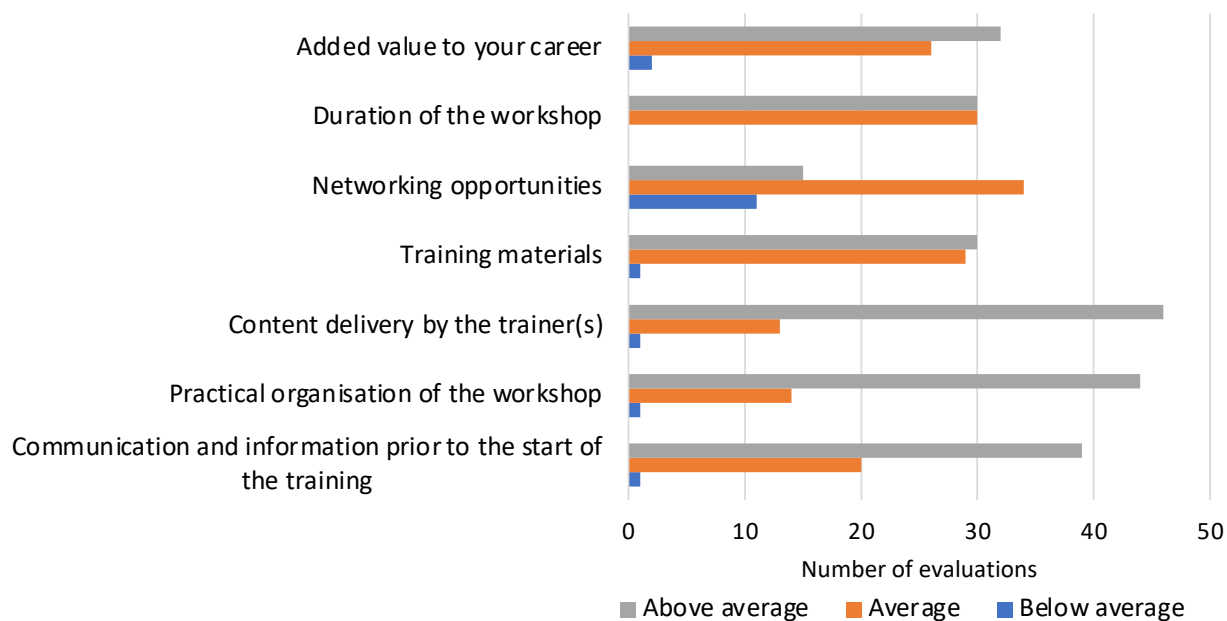


Figure 8 Evaluation per category<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Answer to the question: "How did you experience the following aspects of the workshop?".



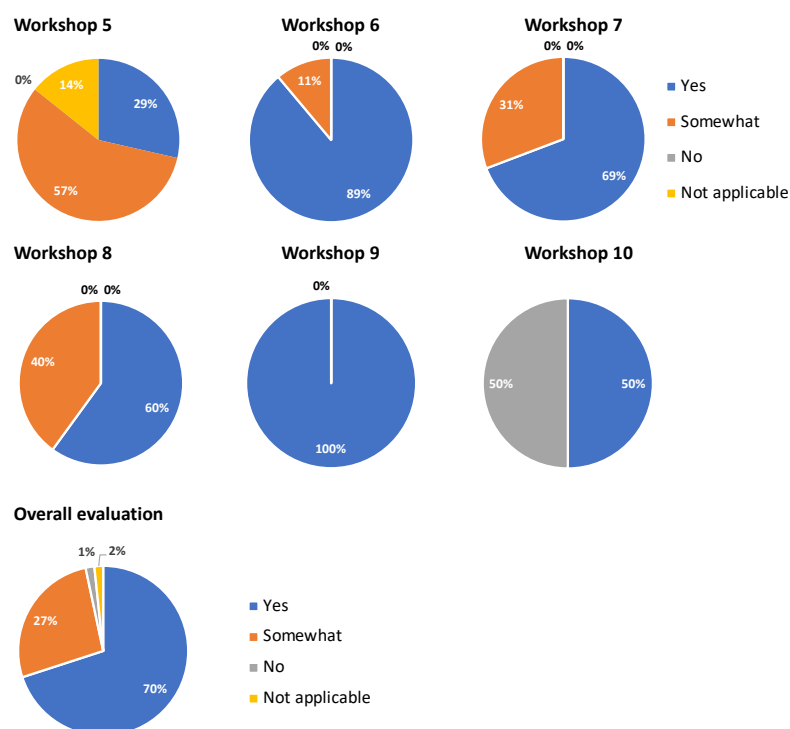


Figure 9 Evaluation of interactiviness<sup>8</sup>

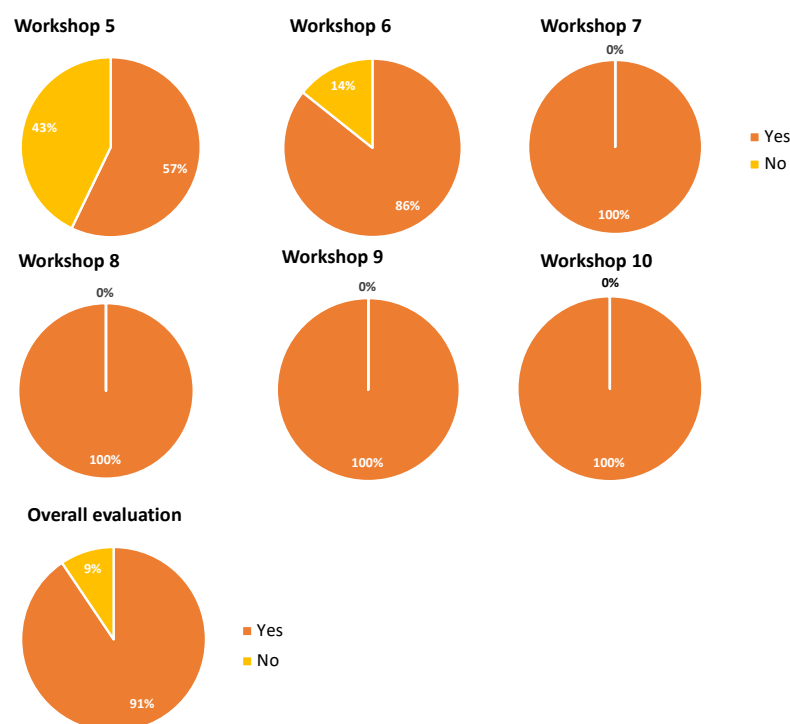


Figure 10 Evaluation of linking research to CERI<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Answer to the question: “Did you find the online workshops engaging and interactive?”

<sup>9</sup> Answer to the question: “Did this workshop help you in linking research to the community?”



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## Section 3: Conclusions and recommendations

To establish a YUFE model of a research community aligned with the principles of open science and societal responsibility, task 2.4 concentrated on providing skills training for researchers and research support staff, where YUFERING developed training programs emphasizing continuous professional development, featuring a blend of ten best practice sharing and workshops serving as both a test bed and training avenue for researchers.

In general, the workshops encompassed a broad range of topics, exploring the intricate relationships among international governing bodies (specifically the EU), national governing bodies, universities, industries, and the general community/civilians.

Overall, the workshops were well appriated by the participants, as demonstrated by the positive feedback recorded in the questionnaire. In addition, the participants were positive about the organization of the workshops, the content and format of the workshop and that they could link their research to CERI due to the workshop. However, the networking possibilities offered by the workshops were rated as being somewhat limited. Although the target audience varied between the workshops, the primary registrants were mainly students and researchers. Similarly, the main attendees who actually participated in the workshops and provided evaluations were predominantly students, followed by researchers. In the YUFE grant proposal, our intended target audience was defined as researchers and research support staff. While we successfully managed to reach the researchers, we did not reach a high number of research support staff. Several factors could have contributed to the low participation of research support staff. One possibility is that the workshops were not effectively communicated to them. Additionally, varying university policies, such as the allocation of time for workshops in addition to their regular duties, might have influenced their ability to attend. Lastly, not all workshop topics were specifically targeting research support staff, which could have affected their interest in participating.

In addition to a low attendance among research support staff, we also observed a low attendance of non-university entities. Despite having several workshop topics (such as “WS4: *how to start a business from scratch*” and “WS5: *Unlocking the hidden value: the art of valorization*”) led by industry experts, attendance remained low. This low attendance might be attributed to inadequate dissemination channels suited for reaching these external groups. Furthermore, despite asking the speakers to distribute the workshops in their own channels, we did not manage to target them. Lastly, company policies related barriers might have played a role as well, especially since the workshops took place during business hours.

On the other hand, we attracted a high number of students. This high number of students could possibly be attributed to the fact that students are generally of younger age and more active on social media platforms and the YUFE website and virtual campus, making them easier to reach compared to researchers and research support staff. However, as outlined in the methods section, we have classified students as early career researchers. This decision was made to reflect our understanding of the



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academic journey, where the foundational stages of a research career begin with student involvement.

Furthermore, we recorded the affiliations of the people who registered for the workshop and of the people who joined the workshop (while complying with European and National data protection regulations). Predominantly, the universities most effectively reached by our workshop dissemination efforts were the University of Eastern Finland and Maastricht University. Given that the workshops were also advertised through several local channels in Maastricht University, a high participation rate from this university was anticipated. However, we also expected that the workshops would also be distributed within the local channels of the other partner universities. This expectation was based on the collaborative nature of the YUFE network, aiming to foster widespread participation and engagement across all partner universities.

The execution of task 2.4 faced certain limitations. First, the effectiveness of these workshops was hampered by the substantial challenge of consistently low registration and participation numbers for the workshops. In addition, even when the number of registered individuals seemed to be high, 43% of registered individuals did not actually attend the workshop. Additionally, it is essential to underscore that the distribution of participants among the various partner universities was not uniform.

While organizing the workshops, we discovered the importance of not only disseminating information through various channels, using a registration form, but also ensuring the event is added into all interested people's calendars. This aspect was particularly relevant due to the time zone differences with several YUFE partner institutes. Implementing the abovementioned changes increased the number of registrations for the workshops that followed. Nonetheless, the number of registrations and actual attendees at the workshops remained quite low, with the highest turnout being around 30 participants and the lowest around 5.

Secondly, while the online format was in general positively assessed in the evaluation, we noticed that it was difficult to make the workshops really interactive. In the online sessions, a common challenge was that participants frequently kept their cameras off, and there was a reluctance to ask questions openly. However, the usage of online quizzes that the participants could join on their own mobile devices was successful and increased the interactivity. Additionally, Zooms "break-out rooms" feature demonstrated to be effective tools for creating an interactive environment. However, in-person workshops would provide a more interactive environment and might serve as a more compelling incentive and possibly a higher turnout of participants/people who actually show up after registering.

Thirdly, the response rate to the evaluation form was also low. While we mentioned the importance of the evaluation form during the workshop and sent multiple email reminders, we still received a limited number of completed forms. Here, an in-person workshop, where attendees are directly prompted to fill in the evaluation form, might be more effective in eliciting responses than an online setting.



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### Section 3.1: Future outlook

Based on the feedback obtained from the questionnaire, our own narrative feedback, and on the very constructive discussions in an in-person YUFE meeting held in Rijeka on September 12, 2023, we now propose a concept for a two-day, in-person conference/training program focused on CERI (tasks 2.4.1 and 2.4.3) (Figure 11).

First, to ensure coherence for the conference/training program, we recommend to focus on one local societal or community problem. While the diverse range of topics that were discussed in the ten workshops described earlier was valuable, it resulted in a lack of coherence. The focus on a societal problem will be the basis of a project, which will also increase the feeling of being useful for society on a more global level and should be developed over an extended period of time.

In addition to the coherent program based on a societal problem, it is important to create specific focus teams consisting of individuals from diverse levels and backgrounds, including the critical inclusion of research support staff and societal and business actors. Their contributions are essential to enrich CERI within universities. These individuals are brought together in a multidisciplinary team, each contributing unique skills and infrastructure, creating a more dynamic and inclusive community. Within these teams, incorporating (regional) companies, along with a more pronounced role for research support staff and societal and business actors, is crucial for fostering a practical and applied approach to research. The integration of these diverse groups should lay the groundwork for a business model where the conference/training program can receive sponsorship. Furthermore, to maximize stakeholder engagement, we recommend to invite relevant stakeholders for networking opportunities and in-depth discussions. The conference adds significant value by providing a dedicated platform for stakeholders to actively engage in discussions to identify common problems, fostering collaborative problem-solving and knowledge exchange. Moreover, it creates a dynamic space for participants to establish meaningful connections, enhancing the overall impact and sustainability of CERI.

Second, to ensure a high number of participants, the conference/training program should be held in-person. This approach aims to prevent the anonymity and “online fatigue” associated with online workshops, which might prevent people from joining and actively participating. Also, in-person meetings offer more viable networking opportunities, an aspect that was identified as limited in the online workshops discussed in this report. In addition, to enhance participant engagement in future workshop initiatives, it is crucial to augment the incentives for participation. A successful intervention employed during the course of the workshops, involved awarding students with certificates for attendance (useful for curriculum vitae), resulting in a substantial increase in participant numbers. This incentive strategy, proven effective for students, should also be extended to include staff members. Another approach to boost participant involvement is to emphasize the significance of commitment by informing the department head in the event of a participant's absence without prior notification. In addition, introducing a selection process could attract more



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engaged participants. This approach was implemented in the YUFERING Task 4.3 workshop “Training Programme for PhD Supervisors”, where attendees were required to submit a motivation letter for workshop participation. This strategy led to a highly focused and interactive workshop.

Lastly, it is important that the conference will be professionally organized by professional full-time organizers. Now, the workshops were organized by academics who had little to no previous experience with event management. Furthermore, securing adequate funding is crucial. The workshops described in this report, operated without financial support, placing a strain on presenters who had to prepare and conduct them in their free time. For the optimal conference/training program, creating a win-win situation where resources and expertise align effectively is vital.

**Conference key suggestions:**

- Coherence
- Relevant societal problem
- Multidisciplinary teams
- Businesses
- Stakeholders
- In-person
- Incentives
- Funding
- Professional organizers

Figure 11 Key points proposed for a successful YUFE CERI conference/training program

### Section 3.2: Summary

Within YUFE, a coherent training program/conference should be developed that will combine different fields and expertise, by a diverse team with unique skills/infrastructure to come up with solutions for local problems within the community.



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## Appendix 1

**Q0: By clicking below, you confirm that you have read and understood the information about the survey and that you voluntarily agree to take part in it.**

**Q1: What is your institutional affiliation?**

- ☐ Maastricht University
- ☐ Nicolaus Copernicus University Torun
- ☐ Tor Vergata University of Rome
- ☐ Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
- ☐ University of Antwerp
- ☐ University of Bremen
- ☐ University of Cyprus
- ☐ University of Eastern Finland
- ☐ University of Essex
- ☐ University of Rijeka
- ☐ Sorbonne Nouvelle University
- ☐ Other, please elaborate

**Q2: What is your occupation?**

- ☐ Bachelor student
- ☐ Master student
- ☐ PhD student
- ☐ Postdoc researcher
- ☐ Senior researcher
- ☐ Research assistant
- ☐ Professor
- ☐ Other

**Q3: Overall, how satisfied are you with your participation in your most recent workshop?**

- ☐ Extremely dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ Extremely satisfied



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**Q4: How did you experience the following aspects of the workshop?**

	Below average	Average	Above average
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication and information prior to the start of the training</li><li>• Practical organisation of the workshop</li><li>• Content delivery by the trainer(s)</li><li>• Training materials</li><li>• Networking opportunities</li><li>• Duration of the workshop</li><li>• Added value to your career</li></ul>			

**Q5: Did you find the online workshops engaging and interactive?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable

**Q6: Was there enough time for questions and discussion during the workshops?**

**Q7: Did you feel that the online format provided you with the same level of learning as an in-person workshop would have?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable

**Q8: Did this workshop help you in linking research to the community?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**Q9: Do you have any additional remarks?**

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