

# CESAER

The strong and united voice of universities  
of science and technology in Europe



**Driving change**  
**Annual Report 2024**

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**April 2025, Leuven**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14938723>



# Letter from the President

As we reflect on 2024, I am deeply proud of the progress we have achieved together with leaders and experts from our Members, as well as with our partners in the EU institutions and across Europe, and I remain very optimistic about the path ahead. This year has been a testament to the strength and unity of our association, and to the commitment of our Members to advancing science, technology, and higher education for the benefit of society.

We began this year with the implementation of our new two-year work plan—a framework designed to elevate the contribution of our association and its Members in tackling the crucial challenges of our time. From sustainability and digital transformation to geopolitics and global collaboration, the role of universities of science and technology has never been more central. As the strong and united voice of universities of science and technology, CESAER has been at the forefront of advocating for impactful policies, strategies, and funding programmes at the European level, while facilitating unparalleled learning opportunities.

One of our association's key strengths lies in its ability to amplify the influence of our Members. This year, we further strengthened our direct engagement with the European Commission, the Council of the EU and the European Parliament. Our efforts ranged from presenting actionable recommendations for the next European framework programme for research and innovation (FP10) and the future of research careers in Europe, to championing the ethical application of artificial intelligence and synthesising and disseminating best practices for engaging PhDs with industry and other non-academic partners. Our collective advocacy has shaped discussions that will have a lasting impact on European research, education, and innovation.

Another highlight was the success of our task forces, which connect hundreds of representatives from our Member universities. Through their expertise, we published influential papers and positions on topics such as the future of rankings, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, European Universities alliances, the European Institute of Innovation & Technology, science diplomacy, and dual-use technologies, to name a few. These efforts underscore the excellent collaboration we have within CESAER and our shared commitment to driving progress in research and higher education in science and technology, at our own universities, across Europe and beyond.

As we look ahead, I encourage all our Members to remain engaged and continue driving change. Together, we will build on our successes and tackle challenges such as bridging the innovation gap, advancing competitiveness alongside sustainability, and fostering resilience and security with determination and creativity.

**Thank you for your dedication to our shared mission. My gratitude also extends to all our partners in the European Commission and EU institutions, as well as our partners and allies across Europe.**

**As President, I am honoured to serve alongside you in shaping a brighter future for society through research, education, and innovation in science and technology.**



**Orla Feely**

President of CESAER

President of University College Dublin

# Foreword from the Secretary General

2024 has been a transformative year for our association, marked by significant achievements across Europe. As Secretary General, I am privileged to reflect on this journey and celebrate the unwavering commitment of our Members, the foundation of our success.

The year saw pivotal changes at the EU level, including the European Parliament elections and the inauguration of a new European Commission. Four key reports in 2024 highlighted the urgency of enhanced European collaboration: the Letta report on the single market, the Draghi report on competitiveness, the Heitor report on research and innovation, and the Niinistö report on resilience and security.

Strengthening Europe's science and technology requires bolstering support for the research and innovation continuum and cultivating the talent driving these advancements. In 2024, our association positioned CESAER at the heart of these critical discussions, ensuring universities of science and technology had a clear and influential voice.

Our advocacy efforts were underpinned by the exceptional collaboration of our Members. Task forces delivered groundbreaking insights, solidifying our role as thought leaders in areas such as research security and generative AI. Initiatives like the Engineer of the Future white paper and the carbon footprint analysis of our 2023 annual meetings showcased our commitment to shaping higher education and sustainability.

We also celebrated the efforts of our Envoys and volunteers, who expanded our influence by engaging with the European Parliament and the Commission, in areas ranging from science and technology infrastructures to research careers. and contributed their expertise to groups focused on science and technology infrastructures. Their work highlights the strength of collaborative action.

Looking to 2025, the continued implementation of our biennial work plan provides a clear focus on responsible internationalisation, ethical technology use, and advancing sustainability. The co-design process for Work Plan 2026-2027 and long-term strategy 2030 ensures we remain leaders in research, education and innovation in science and technology.

**To our Members: thank you for your passion and dedication. Your work has strengthened our association and inspired collaboration and innovation.**

**Together, we will continue driving change as the strong and united voice of universities of science and technology in Europe and beyond.**



**Mattias Björnmalm**  
Secretary General of CESAER



**54** Members from  
**25** countries



Employed over **107,430**  
academic staff



Educated over **1.25** million students,  
of which **232,977** are international



**47** Members involved in **14** European University  
Alliances supported by the **Erasmus+** programme



Over **1550** staff from our Members were involved  
in our association as volunteers and leaders



**13** publications developed and  
published by the association



**21** task force meetings  
(online, hybrid and in-person)



**3** additional onsite events  
(co-)organised by **CESAER**



**1,534** followers on **X** and  
**2,342** followers on **LinkedIn**



# Impact stories

## Navigating complexities

Members of the European Parliament invited CESAER to provide a speaker to discuss the complexities of Horizon Europe, to improve the proposal preparation process.

*"Presenting at the European Parliament was a great opportunity to highlight the challenges of applying for Horizon Europe funding and advocate for efficiency and simplification for applicants in the upcoming framework programme. This is also about balancing the scales in FP10 by valuing research at all Technology Readiness Levels, strengthening interdisciplinarity and allowing sufficient room for research freedom by tipping the scale away from a tender-like approach. This engagement not only amplifies the voice of the scientific community in crucial policy discussions but also showcases the influence and reach that universities can achieve through being a CESAER Member."*



### — Evi Lippens

EU Account Manager Health at the  
Research Support Office of Ghent University

## Science and technology infrastructures

CESAER Envoy Lars Börjesson (Chalmers University of Technology) was invited to join a European Commission expert group on technology infrastructures, contributing to efforts to guide the future of these infrastructures in Europe.

*"Being appointed to a European Commission expert group on technology infrastructures as a CESAER Envoy provided a valuable opportunity to represent the voice of universities of science and technology on a critical issue for research, innovation, and education in Europe. The group's efforts culminated in a comprehensive report on technology infrastructures, offering key insights to guide the European Commission and member states in shaping future policies, strategies, and funding programmes. Our engagement in this expert group highlights how, by working together through CESAER, we can play a pivotal role in proactively shaping key topics on the European agenda."*

### — Lars Börjesson

CESAER Envoy for Science & Technology  
Infrastructures and Professor of Physics  
at Chalmers University of Technology



## Fostering collaboration through widening support

Blanka Marušincová, a member of the CESAER Task Force Sustainable Funding and a key contributor to the CESAER guidelines for strategic cooperation through widening, shared her expertise in the October 2024 workshop on boosting widening participation.

*"Contributing to the CESAER guidelines on widening support was a valuable opportunity to help Members navigate Horizon Europe's widening participation schemes. By sharing insights on initiatives like COST actions, teaming, twinning, and ERA chairs, we aim to empower research support offices to better engage with these opportunities. Feedback from the October 2024 workshop has been crucial in updating the guidelines, which will further enhance collaboration and innovation across Europe. Through CESAER, we could bring together researchers, evaluators, and university representatives, fostering an open and supportive atmosphere. It reaffirmed that while the focus is on supporting widening countries, non-widening countries also benefit, demonstrating that cooperation creates meaningful shifts for all partners involved."*



— **Blanka Marušincová**

Project Manager for International Projects,  
Faculty of Mechanical Engineering,  
Brno University of Technology

## Competitiveness through science & technology

CESAER's [position paper on competitiveness](#) has proven to be a key tool in influencing and shaping EU policies that affect the entire research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem. As Europe navigates major initiatives like the Innovation Act, the Clean Industrial Deal, and the Competitiveness Compass, CESAER has positioned itself at the forefront of these critical discussions.

*"By putting forward our position on competitiveness, CESAER is not only contributing to the ongoing policy dialogue but actively shaping the future direction of European research and innovation. Our advocacy work ensures that universities are understood as not just participants in but leaders of the R&I continuum, particularly in the context of EU strategies aimed at boosting innovation, sustainability, and industrial competitiveness. This position paper has had a direct impact in aligning EU policy frameworks with the needs and strengths of our Member universities, enabling us to champion the crucial role universities of science and technology play in Europe's competitiveness on the global stage."*

— **Louise Drogoul**

Senior Advisor for Innovation &  
Sustainability, CESAER Secretariat





# Main events

## Joint event 'Advancing European space research, education and exploration' with the European Space Agency in Paris



On 11 September 2024, CESAER and the European Space Agency (ESA) co-hosted a joint event at the ESA headquarters in Paris (France), underscoring the critical contributions of universities of science and technology to advancing Europe's space activities. The event convened leaders from our Member universities and space sector experts to explore collaborative efforts to bolster European space research, education, and exploration. The opening session featured welcoming remarks by ESA Director General Josef Aschbacher and CESAER Vice President Tim Bedford. It, among others, highlighted the organisations' commitment to fostering innovation and excellence in space-related initiatives.



A session moderated by CESAER Secretary General Mattias Björnmalm showcased exemplary initiatives from twelve of our Member universities, demonstrating best practices and innovative approaches in space research, education and ecosystem development. The event concluded with discussions on future collaboration, aiming to scale up existing practices and explore new strategies and funding opportunities to drive forward space research and education across Europe. This partnership reflects the growing recognition of the pivotal role universities play in shaping Europe's capabilities in space for sustainable and societal benefits.



## Event with Members of the European Parliament ‘European leadership in times of global tension: advancing Europe’s competitiveness through science and technology’



On 25 September, our association hosted an event in Brussels, on 'European leadership in times of global tension: advancing Europe's competitiveness through science and technology'. This gathering brought together newly elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and their assistants, alongside our President Orla Feely, our Envoy on Research Careers Manuel Heitor, and members of our Task Force Sustainable Funding, including its co-chairs Wendy Sonneveld (Ghent University) and Christian Gerhardt (TU Dresden).



The event provided a crucial platform to explore the role of science and technology in enhancing Europe's global standing and competitiveness amidst evolving geopolitical challenges. It successfully deepened engagement between CESAER and the European Parliament, setting the stage for collaboration and dialogue that will be pivotal in the ongoing parliamentary cycle.



## CESAER Annual Meetings 2024 in Glasgow



From 16 to 18 October 2024, over 130 in-person participants, including Rectors, Presidents and Vice-Chancellors, as well as a broader community from our Members and invited high-level guests gathered for the CESAER Annual Meetings (CAM) 2024, kindly hosted by the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow.



During this event, we discussed and reflected on innovation districts for deep tech and inclusive entrepreneurship.



# Members



1. Aalborg University
2. Aalto University
3. Brno University of Technology
4. Budapest University of Technology and Economics
5. Chalmers University of Technology
6. Delft University of Technology
7. EPFL
8. ETH Zurich
9. Gdańsk University of Technology
10. Ghent University
11. Graz University of Technology
12. *Institut National des Sciences Appliquées Lyon*
13. *Institut Polytechnique de Paris*
14. *Instituto Superior Técnico*
15. Istanbul Technical University
16. Karlsruhe Institute of Technology
17. KTH Royal Institute of Technology
18. KU Leuven
19. *Leibniz Universität Hannover*
20. Lund University
21. National Technical University of Athens
22. National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute"
23. National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest
24. Norwegian University of Science and Technology
25. ParisTech
26. *Politecnico di Milano*

27. *Politecnico di Torino*
28. Poznan University of Technology
29. RWTH Aachen University
30. Sapienza University of Rome
31. Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava
32. Technion - Israel Institute of Technology
33. *Technische Universität Berlin*
34. *Technische Universität Braunschweig*
35. *Technische Universität Darmstadt*
36. *Technische Universität Dresden*
37. TU Wien
38. *Universidad Politécnica de Madrid*
39. *Universidade NOVA de Lisboa*
40. *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya*
41. *Universitat Politècnica de València*
42. *Université Catholique de Louvain*
43. *Université Grenoble Alpes*
44. *Université Paris-Saclay*
45. University College Dublin
46. University of Belgrade
47. University of Porto
48. University of Sheffield
49. University of Southampton
50. University of Strathclyde
51. University of Stuttgart
52. University of Surrey
53. University of Twente
54. Warsaw University of Technology



# Areas of work

In 2024, we worked in seven domains and operated seven corresponding task forces: Sustainability, Openness of Science & Technology, Learning & Teaching, Innovation, Benchmark, Human Resources and Sustainable Funding.

The task forces are essential in (i) identifying the challenges of and pressures on our Members, (ii) including our Members in the priority-setting of the association, and (iii) carrying out CESAER's activities. They provide our Members with opportunities along our [aims](#) and [benefits](#).

## Task Force Sustainability

### CHAIR

**Alberto Garrido**

*Universidad Politécnica de Madrid*



### SECRETARY

**Pillar Villegas Muñoz**

*Universidad Politécnica de Madrid*



Task Force Sustainability pursued three themes during 2024: (i) inspiring our Members and other universities of science and technology about their contribution to knowledge societies for a sustainable future, (ii) advocating for the corresponding framework conditions to optimise the contribution of universities of science and technology to society, and (iii) learning from each other and promoting best practices when contributing to knowledge societies for a sustainable future.

In February 2024, the task force published a [report](#) on the carbon footprint assessment of our 2023 CESAER Annual Meetings. The total carbon footprint reached almost 41 tons of CO2 equivalent, with travel being the primary contributor. This analysis, led by Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM), showcases CESAER's commitment to transparency and sustainability, including the decision to serve exclusively vegetarian meals, contributing to a reduction of the carbon footprint of approximately 3 tons of CO2 equivalent.

The task force also held several key events and workshops throughout the year to follow up on the commitments outlined in the CESAER [declaration](#) and [white paper](#) on sustainability. A workshop in Porto (Portugal) 'From measuring sustainability to good governance and leading by example,' explored ways to measure and reward sustainability contributions and reduce the ecological footprint of universities.

Key contributions included a presentation and exchange with Rachel Martin (Global Director at Elsevier) to explore ways for the task force to work together with Elsevier and further advance our association's contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Additionally, the task force is currently involved in updating the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Green Charter, collaborating with the European Commission to provide practical recommendations for more sustainable research and project management. This effort will help guide universities on sustainability in areas such as travel, energy, waste management, and green purchasing.

Throughout the rest of the current work plan (until the end of 2025), the task force will continue to inspire, advocate, and lead by example in advancing sustainability efforts within universities of science and technology.



Task Force Sustainability meeting hosted by University of Porto



## Task Force Openness of Science & Technology

### CO-CHAIR

**Jennifer Herek**  
University of Twente



### SECRETARY

**Irna Van der Molen**  
University of Twente



### CO-CHAIR

**Simone Rehm**  
University of Stuttgart



Task Force Openness of Science & Technology focused on three main themes in 2024: (i) responsible internationalisation in science and technology (S&T) and maintaining openness in science amidst growing concerns about knowledge security; (ii) open access and open research; and (iii) citizen engagement in sustainability and technology topics that have a societal impact.

Regarding responsible internationalisation, open science, and knowledge security, the task force led on key topics such as knowledge security measures in S&T universities, in a seminar series given by our Members. This seminar series provides a platform for Members to share and discuss their strategies and best practices, as well as the challenges they are facing, in implementing knowledge security measures.



Task Force Openness of Science & Technology events at Aalto University

The task force has also been at the forefront of leading discussions on strengthening dual-use technologies by enhancing EU defence funding (April 2024 [position](#)), offering strategic recommendations on the role of dual-use technologies in EU funding programmes to boost resilience, security and defence capabilities in Europe.

Additionally, the task force has contributed to the advancement of global science diplomacy by sharing the perspectives of S&T universities (June 2024 [position](#)) and the task force contributed to the development of European [guidelines](#) on the responsible use of generative AI (March 2024 guidelines published by the European Commission).



Task Force Openness of Science & Technology events at Aalto University

Moreover, regarding the topic of citizen engagement in sustainability and technology, the task force contributed and participated in an interactive workshop at CAM 2024 in Glasgow — including all task forces — on the topic of ‘Inclusive science engagement: from societal contract to inspiring the next generation’.

Lastly, on open access and open science, the task force explored financial implications of the transition to open access in a dedicated Members-only workshop in April 2024 hosted by Aalto University.

## Task Force Learning & Teaching

### CO-CHAIR

**Justyna Szostak**  
Gdańsk University of  
Technology



### CO-CHAIR

**Roberto Zanino**  
*Politecnico di Torino*



### SECRETARY

**Mara Baccolla**  
*Politecnico di Torino*



Task Force Learning & Teaching pursued three main themes during the year: (i) European University Alliances with shaping the internationalisation of higher education within Europe and beyond; (ii) sharing best practices, identifying and discussing opportunities and challenges for universities of science and technology on the transformation of learning & teaching in higher education in the green and digital (twin) transition; and (iii) exploring ways to enhance the engagement of students from our Members in the strategy and operations of the task force, our association and our Members.



In November 2024, members of Task Force Learning & Teaching met at *Politecnico di Torino Hub* in Brussels

Addressing the first theme, a [position paper](#) on the future of alliances was published in July 2024. This position builds on the CAM 2023 workshop led by Task Force Learning & Teaching, with valuable contributions from Task Force Sustainable Funding.

In line with the second theme - transforming learning and teaching in response to the twin transition - the [white paper](#) 'Engineer of the future' was published in April 2024. This publication offers recommendations to guide universities in providing future-proof engineering education. Led by Luc Taerwe (former Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture at Ghent University), the authors examine the evolution of engineering education and offer recommendations for advanced engineering education in Europe. We extend our sincere appreciation to leading global scholars, including Professor Amitava 'Babi' Mitra (Executive Director of New Engineering Education Transformation at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States); Professor Jian Lin (Leader of the Engineering Education Discipline at Tsinghua University in China); and Professor John Mitchell (Co-Director of the Centre for Engineering Education at University College London in the United Kingdom) for their feedback and review of the paper.

In 2024, the task force refined its mission and three key workstreams were initiated on industrial doctorates, governance models of alliances, and European Degree, with envisioned outcomes in 2025 including case studies, workshops, input note and an interview-based report.



## Task Force Innovation

### CO-CHAIR

**Tim Bedford**

University of Strathclyde



### SECRETARY

**Yvonne Kinnaird**

University of Strathclyde



### CO-CHAIR

**Toril Hernes**

Norwegian University of  
Science and Technology



Task Force Innovation explored three themes: (i) key technologies and their ethical applications, (ii) entrepreneurship and (iii) innovation ecosystems.

Building on previous conferences and statements, the task force focused on the applications of emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), and how universities of science and technology (S&T) can collaborate with industry while addressing ethical and non-technical issues. In April 2024, a session was held at TU Wien during the task force's first meeting, discussing the ethical application of AI in research and innovation, and the importance of responsible internationalisation and innovation.



Task Force Innovation held its events at TU Wien

Regarding the theme of entrepreneurship, Task Force Innovation, in collaboration with Task Force Human Resources, organised an online workshop on 'Models of engagement for PhDs with non-academic partners'. This workshop focused on the evolving engagement models of PhD candidates at universities of S&T with industry and societal partners, highlighting the role of industrial doctorates as vehicles for innovation. [A report](#) featuring case studies and recommendations for university leadership, industry, and European institutions was developed and published in October 2024 as part of our CESAER Annual Meetings.



Task Force Innovation held its events at TU Wien

Regarding the theme of entrepreneurship, Task Force Innovation, in collaboration with Task Force Human Resources, organised an online workshop on 'Models of engagement for PhDs with non-academic partners'. This workshop focused on the evolving engagement models of PhD candidates at universities of S&T with industry and societal partners, highlighting the role of industrial doctorates as vehicles for innovation. A report featuring case studies and recommendations for university leadership, industry, and European institutions was developed and published in October 2024 as part of our CESAER Annual Meetings.



Additionally, in April 2024, the task force held a workshop on supporting diverse & inclusive entrepreneurship at TU Wien (Austria). This workshop explored strategies for promoting underrepresented groups in entrepreneurship, drawing insights from CESAER's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and sustainability.

The task force has been instrumental in supporting the development of sustainable regional innovation ecosystems around universities of S&T. The task force contributed to CAM 2024, particularly the high-level conference on “Innovation districts – from deeptech and entrepreneurship to inclusive innovation”. This event played a key role in advancing discussions on the intersection of deep tech, regional development, and inclusive innovation, aligning with our broader work on innovation ecosystems.

The conference outcomes fed directly into the task force's ongoing efforts to navigate the Euro-

pean innovation landscape, including strengthening the roles of the European Innovation Council (EIC) and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). These discussions, which was also informed by our [position](#) ‘Revitalise the European Institute of Innovation & Technology’ (June 2024), underscore CESAER's leadership in shaping innovation ecosystems and promoting universities of S&T as central hubs for regional growth and societal impact.

The task force also spearheaded the development of a [position paper](#) ‘Competitiveness, reindustrialisation, and strategic autonomy through leadership in science & technology (May 2024), which highlights the role of universities of science & technology in shaping Europe's competitiveness. This position paper is a key advocacy tool in shaping the future direction of European policies, initiatives and funding instruments related to competitiveness, to ensure that universities of science and technology can fully contribute.



## Task Force Benchmark

### CHAIR

**Peter Elspass**

*Leibniz Universität  
Hannover*



In 2024, Task Force Benchmark focused on three key areas: (i) engaging with ranking agencies like Times Higher Education (THE) and QS World University Rankings by defining strategic lines for transparency and fairness in rankings and establishing regular communication channels to convey Members' feedback on methodological updates; (ii) influencing the development and implementation of the European Higher Education Sector Observatory (EHESO), exploring how European Universities Alliances' performances will be evaluated, and (iii) fostering formal and informal peer-learning opportunities among Members, promoting internal transparency, sharing information about national science evaluation systems, and exchanging best practices in internal evaluations of science and benchmarking methods and ranking analysis.

In March 2024, the task force advanced its efforts around monitoring the progress of European University Alliances through a dedicated event that explored the critical topic on monitoring the success of individual alliances versus assessing the initiative as a whole. The task force is continuing its efforts, together with Task Force Learning & Teaching, in support of co-creating monitoring frameworks with alliances, and ensuring such future frameworks acknowledges the diverse range of activities and approaches across different alliances.



Task Force Benchmark meeting hosted by KTH

In line with the first key area, which involves engaging with ranking agencies and shaping the ranking landscape, the task force held a joint workshop with our Board of Directors on 'Reimagining university rankings: exploring strategic priorities and alternatives' in June 2024. Participants in the workshop engaged in small group discussions on the future of the ranking landscape. Separate groups then focused on evaluating university performance, refining ranking methodologies, enhancing league table rigour, addressing data-driven impact analysis needs, and prioritising metrics beyond traditional rankings. The insights gained from these discussions were compiled into a workshop [report](#) published in November 2024.



Task Force Benchmark meeting hosted by KTH



## Task Force Human Resources

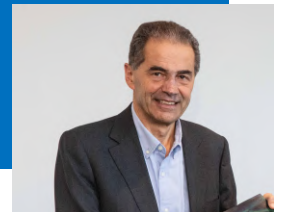
### CO-CHAIR

**Tanya Bondarouk**  
University of Twente



### CO-CHAIR

**Manuel Heitor**  
*Instituto Superior  
Técnico*



### SECRETARY

**Janke Rademaker**  
University of Twente

### SECRETARY

**Lotte Sander**  
University of Twente

Task Force Human Resources has pursued two main themes over the year: (i) supporting modern and stable research careers in Europe and (ii) COARA and the implementation of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment. The task force continued to be at the forefront of promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in science and technology. This has been achieved by contributing to the finalisation and reporting of the EDI Survey 2023 ([March 2024 report](#)), which highlighted that, on average, 70% of the commitments made in our [2019 EDI Declaration](#) have been met. Moreover, the task force contributed and participated in an interactive workshop about inclusive science engagement at CAM 2024 in Glasgow.

The task force supported modern and stable research careers in Europe in various ways, including two processes which served as evidence for the [CESAER Research Careers report](#). The evidence for this report includes (i) gathering data on research careers among CESAER Members through the CESAER Research Careers Survey 2024 and (ii) collection of case studies that serve as good practice examples in creating more stability and better-quality jobs in research careers. The report provides recommendations to address the critical issue of European brain drain (primarily to the United States), and to create more stability and better-quality jobs in research careers. This report was published at the end of the year.

Furthermore, the task force supported modern and stable research careers by contributing to the drafting of a position paper on the future of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions programme (May 2024 [position](#)). The task force has also been supporting our CESAER Research Career Envoy Manuel Heitor, who represented our association in numerous events, including the MSCA conference (April 2024 [event](#)) and the European Commission's research career conference in November 2024.



Manuel Heitor, Co-Chair of Task Force Human Resources, (second from the left) at MSCA conference



## Task Force Sustainable Funding

### CO-CHAIR

**Christian Gerhardtts**  
Technische Universität  
Dresden



### SECRETARY

**Romy Ginzel**  
Technische Universität  
Dresden

### CO-CHAIR

**Wendy Sonneveld**  
Ghent University



Task Force Sustainable Funding has pursued two main themes: (i) advocating to shape EU funding programmes in research, education and innovation such as Horizon Europe and Erasmus and the European Structural and Investment Funds and (ii) advocating to shape European research, education and innovation policies and strategies (especially towards the EU institutions), and contributing to the implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) and the European (Higher) Education Area (EEA).

During its first meeting of 2024, the task force organised a workshop hosted by University College Dublin, entitled 'Shaping the future of European funding for research & innovation through FP10'. During that workshop, held in collaboration with our Board of Directors, Manuel Heitor, in his role as Chair of the Europe-

an Commission's High-Level Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of Horizon Europe, introduced the objectives and timeline of the report the group was asked to produce. He shared emerging insights from the expert group's work, followed by an in-depth exchange on several key topics.

A major activity of the task force was the organisation of the [MEP welcome reception](#) held on 25 September 2024 in Brussels. This event expanded our association's network with new Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to help further advance CESAER's advocacy efforts and formed the start of working more closely with CESAER Members in keeping contacts with the European Parliament. The event was a success and yielded several new high-level connections with key partners in the European Parliament.

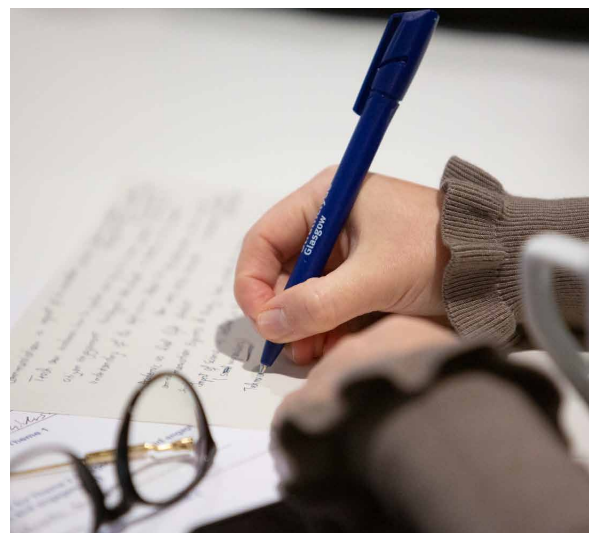
The task force also led the development of a position paper 'For a flexible, resilient and impactful Erasmus+' ([February 2024](#)). This paper outlines three main sectors for improvement in the Erasmus+ programme and was elaborated with guidance and support from task force Learning & Teaching.



Throughout 2024, this task force supported our other task forces in developing various position papers such as ‘Shaping science diplomacy: Perspectives of universities of science & technology’ ([June 2024](#)) and ‘Empowering excellence: European Universities Alliances as laboratories for success stories’ ([July 2024](#)). Moreover, the task force provided input to consultations on the future of the European Research Area. Beginning of December 2024, the task force also submitted suggestions for amendments on behalf of our association on the draft report on ‘the assessment of the implementation of Horizon Europe in view of its interim evaluation and recommendations for the 10th Research Framework Programme’.



Task Force Sustainable Funding meeting at TU Berlin office in Brussels



# Governing bodies

## Presidency 2024-2025

The Presidency 2024-2025 consists of:



**President**  
**Orla Feely**

University College  
Dublin  
Ireland



**Vice-President**

**Tim Bedford**  
University of  
Strathclyde  
United Kingdom



**Vice-President &  
Treasurer**

**Jennifer Herek**  
University of Twente  
Netherlands

## Board of Directors 2024-2025

The Board of Directors 2024-2025 is composed of the members of the Presidency and:



**Guillermo  
Cisneros Perez**

*Universidad  
Politécnica de  
Madrid*

Spain



**Mihnea Costoiu**

National University  
of Science and  
Technology  
POLITEHNICA  
Bucharest

Romania



**Katharina  
Füglistner**

*EPFL - École  
Polytechnique  
Fédérale de  
Lausanne*

Switzerland



**Toril Hernes**

Norwegian  
University of  
Science and  
Technology

Norway



**Mikael  
Östling**

KTH Royal  
Institute of  
Technology

Sweden



**Karine  
Samuel**

*Université  
Grenoble Alpes*

France



**Justyna  
Szostak**

Gdańsk  
University of  
Technology

Poland



**Ronald  
Tetzlaff**

*Technische  
Universität  
Dresden*

Germany



**Roberto  
Zanino**

*Politecnico di  
Torino*

Italy

# Resources

The annual subscription in 2024 amounted to €13,614. The annual account for our fiscal year from 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024 was:

TYPE COSTS	ACCOUNTS 2023-2024, €
INTERNAL BODIES	38 822
SECRETARIAT	78 657
EVENTS	664
INITIATIVES	50 354
ICT	22 741
ADMINISTRATION	42 222
SALARIES	452 929
TOTAL EXPENSES	686 389
TOTAL INCOME	762 402
TO RESERVE	76 013





# Secretariat

The Secretariat ensures the execution and implementation of the decisions by the governing bodies and manages and supports the daily operations of the association. During 2024, Advisor for Higher Education Sophie Ratcliff finished her contract on 30 June 2024. On 2 April 2024, Vincent Klein Ikkink and Touko Närhi joined the Secretariat as Junior Advisors, for Research and for Benchmark & Education respectively.

As of 31 December 2024, the Secretariat has the following staff supporting our association's over 1,550 volunteers and leaders:



**Indrė Antanavičiūtė**

Operations Manager



**Mattias Björnmalm**

Secretary General



**Louise Drogoul**

Senior Advisor for Innovation  
& Sustainability



**Vincent Klein Ikkink**

Advisor for Research



**Justine Moynat**

Information & Communication  
Officer



**Touko Närhi**

Advisor for Benchmark  
& Higher Education

# CESAER

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