‘What’s in it for me?’: European examples for internationalising university-industry partnerships

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Zsuzsanna Zarka, PhD

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AQ AUSTRIA Agentur für Qualitätssicherung und Akkreditierung

3s

Internationalisation and industry partnerships

Three EU policy strands that connect skills, competitiveness, and transnational cooperation

2025

UNION OF SKILLS

Skills circulation
Upskilling & reskilling
Competitiveness

2022

EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR UNIVERSITIES

Twin transitions
Innovation capacity
European cooperation

2019

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCES

Transnational structures
Joint learning & research
Regional–European networks

INTERNATIONALISATION
UNIVERSITY–INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP

70+ European University Alliances

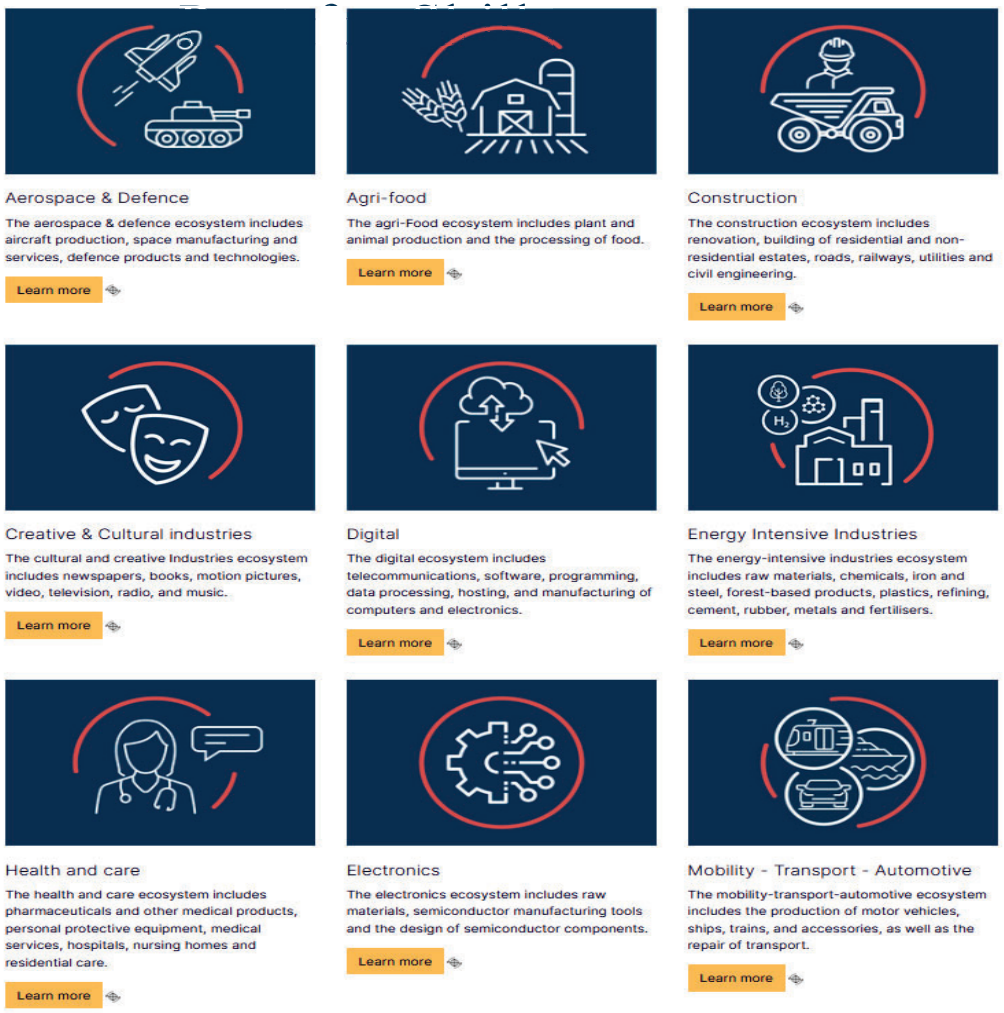
650+ higher education institutions

14 industrial ecosystems in the Pact for Skills

Pact for Skills

https://pact-for-skills.ec.europa.eu/about/industrial-ecosystems-and-partnerships_en

LinkedIn Group: https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12664287/



Large-scale Partnerships:

Aerospace & Defence
Agri-food
Construction
Creative & Cultural Industries
Digital
Energy Intensive Industries

Health and care
Electronics
Mobility-Transport-Automotive
Proximity & Social Economy
Renewable Energy
Retail
Textiles
Tourism

European University Alliances

- Flagship initiative of the European Strategy for Universities, and the European Skills Agenda (2020)
- Currently, 73 Alliances encompass over 650 HEIs across Europe
- Provider-driven alliances, working with private sector, local, regional, and national public authorities

Industry-led and university-led models create different entry points

They are complementary: the best fit depends on the institution's strategic priority.

INDUSTRY-LED

PACT FOR SKILLS —LARGE-SCALE PARTNERSHIPS

Ecosystem-driven collaboration for up- and reskilling in the green and digital transitions. They support:

- Defining and refining "job-ready" skills
- Co-designing learning offers with major actors in the sector(s)
- Alignment between micro-credentials development and university LLL
- Internationalisation activities with a thematic focus

UNIVERSITY-LED

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCES

Alliance-wide structures can help extend existing regional industry missions into a European network.

- Peer learning and broader industry networks
- Innovation hubs, matchmaking and co-creation
- Project- and challenge-based learning opportunities
- Regional development with an international dimension

One approach starts from an industrial ecosystem; the other from a university network —both can bring internationalisation perspective into the third mission.

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Some universities already combine both routes

This creates a practical bridge between sector skills partnerships and transnational university networks.

INSTITUTION	PACT / LSP	UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE	BENEFITS
TU Graz	Automotive Skills Alliance Microelectronics LSP European Chips Skills Academy	UNITE	Sector-linked skills work + European engineering network
FH Joanneum	Automotive LSP Tourism LSP	EU4DUAL	Dual-study mission + international sector partnerships
University of Applied Sciences St Pölten	Transport/Mobility ecosystem Construction LSP	E3UDRES² (coordinator)	Innovation Hubs connect industry, research and education across regions
Montanuniversität Leoben	—	EURECA-PRO (coordinator)	Structured industry engagement around responsible consumption & production

TU Graz, FH Joanneum & USTP participate in both partnership types.

Alliances can also offer low-risk entry points: hubs, projects, mentorship, matchmaking and co-creation.

Internationalisation with a purpose

Cross-border industry collaboration can create value across teaching, innovation and the evolving third mission.

01 SKILLS INTELLIGENCE

Earlier insight into emerging industry needs and “job-ready” competence profiles.

02 CO-DESIGN & CO-DELIVERY

A forum for developing relevant learning offers with employers and sector bodies.

03 LLL & MICRO-CREDENTIALS

Flexible, non-degree offers can reach new learner groups.

04 NETWORK REACH

Broader access to companies, peers, researchers and partner regions across Europe.

05 INNOVATION CAPACITY

Challenge-based collaboration, hubs and joint projects connect education and innovation.

06 MISSION & PROFILE

A European dimension can diversify the university’s third mission while maintaining regional roots.

Provides access to networks that sharpen relevance, reach and learning innovation.

Choose the route that aligns with institutional priorities

START HERE

What is the strategic priority?

SECTOR / SKILLS

Join the relevant Pact for Skills LSP(s)

INSTITUTION / INNOVATION

Use Alliance-wide industry platforms and hubs

BOTH

Bridge the two routes institutionally

WHATEVER THE ROUTE

1. **Protect regional roots**
   Use cross-border activity to complement local and regional partnerships.
2. **Make the value proposition explicit**
   Partners need to see clearly how they can engage and what they gain.
3. **Offer low-risk entry points**
   Projects, hubs, mentoring and matchmaking allow trust to grow organically.
4. **Use partnerships to widen LLL**
   Flexible pathways and non-degree offers can bring new learners to the university.

Opportunity or an increasing necessity?

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www.3s.co.at

Thank you for your attention!

Zsuzsanna Zarka, PhD
3s Unternehmensberatung GmbH
Wiedner Hauptstraße 18
1040 Wien

T +43-1-5850915
Zsuzsanna.Zarka@3s.co.at