

DRC NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER
2020



DRC
Danube Rectors' Conference

Dear subscribers to the DRC Newsletter,

We reached the end of this difficult year which brought many unexpected changes in the way we live, work and also think of education. We were pushed to overcome our limits, to reinvent ourselves and fulfil our mission through alternatives and virtual tools.

This was not easy but the **Danube Rectors' Conference** accepted the challenge and used all the technical support possible to deliver you the best initiatives and involve you in a variety of activities to not leave you behind, and above all, to not let the restrictions limit the work we do with commitment and dedication.

In this regard, we would like to thank you for the enthusiasm, participation and interaction that you have demonstrated so far and **we look forward to further cooperation with you in 2021!**

Enjoy reading and remember, feedback and comments are always [welcome!](#)



The Danube Rectors' Conference
wish you a Merry and Healthy
Christmas and
a Happy New Year!

Thank you for your cooperation, we look
forward to see you in 2021 for another year
of exciting activities!

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1. DRC GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020

During the **DRC General Assembly 2020** in **November** we discussed the remarkable achievements of this past year. The **new DRC presidency for the period 2021-2022** was elected, the financial budget was approved, we also had the pleasure to welcome within our network two new members: the [University of Banja Luka](#) and the [Deggendorf Institute of Technology](#). Throughout the year, we organised and partnered various events online, we launched the [Jean Monnet FIFUDEM project "Democracy Talks"](#) with the **Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM)** and through the **OeAD scholarship programmes** we gave the possibility to four students from all over Europe to attend the [Green Building Solution Summer school](#) and the [AEMS Summer school](#).

More information about the DRC General Assembly 2020 can be found in the [minutes](#) that are available in the Intranet on the [DRC webpage](#). Please, [contact the DRC Secretariat](#) in case you cannot access the Intranet!

Agenda of the DRC General Assembly 2020

1. Opening
 2. Approval of the Agenda of the DRC General Assembly 2020
 3. Approval of the Minutes of the DRC General Assembly 2019
 4. Annual report on DRC activities 2020
 5. Annual report of the DRC Secretariat 2020
 6. DRC Summer School 2020
 7. Report on the DRC financial situation in 2020
 8. DRC Membership issues
 - Application of the University of Banja Luka
 - Application of the Deggendorf University of Applied Sciences
 9. Election of the new DRC Presidency
 10. DRC Action Plan for 2021
 11. DRC Financial Budget for 2021
 12. Any other business
 13. Closing
-

2. PRESIDENT POPOVIC WINS EXCELLENCE AWARD 2020

We are glad to announce that the **DRC President** and **Rector of the University of Belgrade Prof. Dr. Ivanka Popović** has been awarded the prestigious **Excellence Award 2020** for her commitment and dedication in the field of education.

*'It is really a privilege to be in the company of such distinguished laureates of this award. I would like to thank **Hemofarm Foundation** and **Hemofarm** for considering me in general for such a prestigious award. It's a really special*



*honor for me. I would like to especially thank my home **Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy**, which enabled me to practice my profession, but also the **Serbian Chemical Society**, which also influenced my professional path and means a lot to me and I believe that its work in Serbian society is exceptionally significant', Prof. Dr. Popović said when receiving the award.*

The **Hemofarm Foundation** is active since 1933 and it's the leading foundation in Serbia. This awards-winner foundation has been working in the area of health to improve the quality of services and life within society and it's been also investing in programmes aimed to support younger generations in the field of culture and education.

In this perspective, in 2018 they established the **"Excellence Award"** a prize for those personalities who stood out with their outstanding achievements, their dedication and persistence in the field of culture, health and education. These values inspired the artist Alexandar Vac who designed this year's statuette with the shape of a crane symbolizing persistence and perserverance as the two main lever to change the future.

Source: www.fondacijahemofarm.org.rs

3. Polish-Austrian-Italian Triologue: Future of Universities



The Polish-Austrian-Italian Triologue which took place on the 2nd of December and organised by the [Polish Academy of Sciences – Scientific Centre](#) in Vienna in cooperation with [Accademia Polacca Roma](#) and [Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe \(IDM\)](#), in the framework of the project "[Future of Universities](#)" partnered with the [Danube Rectors' Conference](#), the [Instytut Allerhanda](#) and the [Klub Jagielloński](#) **is now available online!**

The topic of discussion was the influence of worldwide COVID19 pandemic from the perspective of three different countries on higher education, the following consequences for students and teachers and most importantly the possible scenarios and opportunities caused, In case you missed it, this interesting webinar is now available on the [Polish Academy of Sciences - Scientific Centre Youtube channel](#) or click on the video below!



4. JRC | New call for Open Access to the JRC Nanobiotechnology Laboratory



We are glad to announce the [launch of a call to access the Nanobiotechnology Laboratory](#) at the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission in [Ispra](#).

The JRC facilitates the access to the Nanobiotechnology Laboratory by waiving the access costs and in particular by providing travel and subsistence to users visiting the JRC from institutions from [countries eligible](#) for the [Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation Action](#).

The [Nanobiotechnology Laboratory](#) features state-of-the-art equipped facilities designed to foster interdisciplinary studies. A special emphasis lies on characterisation of nanomaterials, micro(nano)plastics, nanomedicines, advanced materials and their interactions with biological systems, as well as on the detection, identification and characterisation of nanomaterials in food and consumer products.



Priority topics of the [call](#):

- Nanomaterial characterisation including their interactions with biological systems (culture media, proteins, etc.)
- Detection of nanomaterials and nano(micro)plastics in complex matrices

- Surface chemical analysis of macro and nanomaterials. Surface modification and nano-fabrication
- Biomolecular interaction studies, characterisation of antibodies and antigens, bio-interfaces characterisation
- Advanced material characterisation for non-bio-applications (energy, transport, circular economy, environment etc.).

You can find all relevant information here:

- [Call](#)
- [JRC Nanobiotechnology Laboratory: video](#) and [360° Virtual Tour](#)
- [Open Access of the JRC Research Infrastructures](#)

5. EUA Open Science Survey



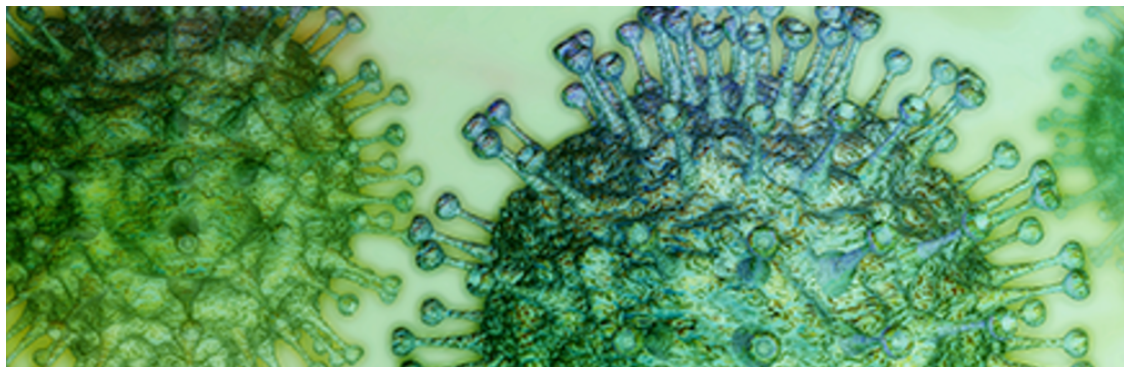
We would like to inform you that the deadline for submitting your institution's views and experiences on Open Science through the **EUA Open Science Survey** has been extended until **15 January 2021**. It is essential for EUA to be able to develop evidence-based policies, to effectively advocate for adequate conditions and policies

at European and national levels and to support member institutions in the transition to Open Science. Gathering a large and representative number of responses to this survey is therefore critical for EUA's voice on Open Science to reflect the situation and needs across the broad membership of the Association

We therefore invite your institution to take part in the EUA Open Science Survey, if you have not already done so. Your contribution is essential to support capacity-building activities for EUA members and to strengthen the voice of universities in European policy making.

The survey can be accessed through this [link](#), we would like to draw your attention to the fact that the survey should be filled out by the people or departments involved in developing and implementing Open Science policies and activities at your institution.

6. COVID-19 Measures at the Universities



We are recovering from difficult times we experienced in the past months. Although the intensity of COVID-19 is waning in Europe, we need to learn from our experiences and be prepared for potential second wave of the virus.

We also express our gratitude to all our member universities and their students as well as to all other educational institutions in the region for showing immense solidarity throughout the crisis. In the future, the universities should continue to be the driving force for innovation and research in the region and beyond, and thus contribute to contain the fallout of the corona crises both in health and socio-economic terms.

Currently the economies are opening up, however, the universities are yet to operate normally. The introduction of different forms of **distance learning** was an unprecedented and in many ways challenging situation for most universities in the region. In order to use the gained experiences efficiently we need to exchange the lessons learned regarding the distance learning.

Therefore, we decided to explore how university associations such as DRC could contribute to alleviating the impact of government measures on universities, whereas **our focus primarily referred to various forms of the distance learning (E-learning)**. The collected information on the possibilities of the distance contact could consequently also be used during our DRC Annual conference taking place in November this year.

For more details on how some DRC member universities are coping with the current challenging situation, click [here](#). Also DRC President and Rector of the University of Belgrade **Ivanka Popović** has, amongst others, addressed the measures introduced at the University of Belgrade following the government regulations. To watch the IDMonSite discussion with Ivanka Popović, click [here](#).

We would like to ask you to share your ideas and recommendations for our activity during these times of crisis and to share with us your experience, know-how and good practices in order to face the current situation.

Please contact us via our e-mail address info@drc-danube.org

We wish you every success in coping with the emergency measures and take care of yourself!

7. CASEE NEWSLETTER



The “**ICA Regional Network for Central and South Eastern Europe**” (CASEE) is a network of Central and South Eastern European Higher Education Institutions linking Life Science disciplines in the region ranging from natural resources, environment, food, agriculture, biotechnology and natural resources.

Besides fascinating updates and opportunities in this newsletter, CASEE prepared a COVID-19 corner informing about challenges at the educational institutions related to the current pandemic situation.

Check CASEE's December Newsletter [here](#) !

8. EUA online Thematic Workshop



The **EUA-CDE Thematic Workshop** will take place online on **21-22 January 2021** and it will gather more than 260 universities to discuss emerging issues related to digitalisation in the framework of doctoral education.

Nowadays, digitalisation plays an important role within education, artificial intelligence and other forms of data-driven research have increasingly been the focus of discussions as they provide new and unexpected opportunities, but also raise questions related to the risks attached to the development of such new technologies. This workshop will focus on the role of **doctoral education in the context of these rapid technological and conceptual changes, how doctoral schools are influenced and how they can make efficient use of emerging digital technologies**. It will discuss the training and skills needs of doctoral candidates and provide a forum for an exchange of reflections and good practices.

The workshop's **programme** is divided into two main parts. It combines two webinars open to anyone with an interest in doctoral education and several online sessions reserved to **EUA-CDE members** only.

Deadline for registration is **19 January**.

Register

9. DRC Facebook Page



We are trying to improve the circulation of information within our network. We kindly ask you to also connect with us via [Facebook](#) and visit the [DRC webpage](#).

Thank you very much and best regards from Vienna

 DRC - Danube Rectors' Conference

10. EUA Affiliate Status and EUA Newsletter

We are continuously strengthening and expanding our network. Since November 2015, the DRC is affiliate member of the [European University Association](#).

If you are interested in their news and activities, please follow the [link](#).



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Website



Facebook

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