

Una Europa One Health Self-steering committee workshop

Task 1.9; 1.11; 1.12. Defining priority challenges; Developing a format for supporting systematic collaboration on the Una Europa priority global challenges; Developing a concept for a Una Europa collaboration platform

Summary of the workshop methodology and outcomes; WP1; 20th January 2024

Methodology

The Una.Resin WP1 project managers from UH and FUB attended the first workshop organised by the Una Europa One Health Self Steering Committee in Bertinoro, Italy 1st-2nd February 2022. The goals of the workshop were to:

- 1) consolidate the Una OH SSC through a better knowledge of the Una Europa partner institutions
- 2) improve the level of awareness of the alliance and ongoing and upcoming projects
- 3) finalize the final OH Future workshop document as a position paper
- 4) design the first Una OH summer school
- 5) define a possible joint or multiple PhD pathway
- 6) identify and conceptualize possible joint research projects.

For WP1, the workshop provided an opportunity to present goals and preliminary outcomes of Una.Resin to the researchers and consult them on upcoming tasks of WP1, namely the implementation of **pilots** (task 1.11 according to GA) to facilitate research collaboration and the conceptualization of an **online platform** (task 1.12) for supporting R&I collaboration within Una Europa, formats that should be sustainable beyond the project lifecycle of Una.Resin. The workshop also allowed WP to discuss elements of a **Una Europa funding strategy** (task 1.9) that shall include possible funding opportunities as well as practices to support match-making and common proposals.

On the first day, WP1 project managers presented Una.Resin's goals and specifically the R&I strategy process. This was followed up by discussions on the 1Europe roll-out, Una Europa international strategy preparation, as well as on collaborations with the private sector. On the second day, participants worked in rotating groups on four topics, namely the summer school, possible joint PhDs, the position paper, and possible joint research projects.

WP1 project managers facilitated the discussion on the last topic together with Una Europa Senior external funding officer. The initial goal was to identify common interests in the Horizon Europe 2022 call. Due to the early stages of Una Europa One Health collaboration and the short deadlines, this turned out to be not feasible. Thus, it was decided to conduct a workshop series, both online and in person, for OH as **Una.Resin pilots** in fall 2022. Co-organized with Una Europa vzw's senior external funding advisor, the workshops should facilitate joint proposals for Horizon Europe 2023 calls.

In addition to the discussion of Horizon Europe calls, WP1 had prepared discussion points on ecosystems, young researchers as Una Europa's main target group, the effectiveness of co-creation workshops, as well as funding opportunities. The discussion of these topics was continued in the plenary as well as informally during breaks.

1. Key Outcomes for the R&I Strategy and the WP1 pilots

Una Europa Support for Funding

The researchers participating in the workshop had so far limited experience with Horizon Europe funded projects and indicated a strong interest in applying for Horizon Europe funding together. As mentioned, this will be taken up by WP1 pilots.

Una Europa as a Facilitator of Interdisciplinary Research

Participating researchers saw the value of Una Europa both as possibility to find new collaborations as well as in the realm of research support. They articulated a need to shift research paradigms within OH and increase interdisciplinarity in order to solve major challenges. Identifying researchers outside of one's fields is generally considered difficult. Researchers supported the suggestion that Una Europa could play a major role in facilitating the identification of researchers in other fields with whom research questions could be tackled. This was in fact seen as a key added value. As an attendee put it: "Science is about finding new knowledge. Una Europa can help us to find researchers who work on the same questions, but from different angles."

To build a multidisciplinary community within focus areas, several suggestions were made which will be further explored within Una.Resin:

- An interdisciplinary **Una Europa Fair** with researchers from various disciplines and external stakeholders
- An **online platform** which increases the visibility and fields of expertise of Una Europa researchers, allows match-making and collaboration to create high quality consortia for acquiring competitive funding. The platform should allow the search for specific profiles and keywords and allow the posting of calls of interest, in particular in the interest of early career researchers.
- **Match-making** specifically aimed at young researchers, for example through summer-schools
- **Seed funding** to support multidisciplinary initiatives (already existing on Una Europa level)
- **Una Europa training for PhD students** could include training for methods and tools to enhance multidisciplinary collaboration (for example research methods of different fields and ways to write multidisciplinary research publication).

To be able to communicate the aims of Una Europa OH to researchers from other fields and potential non-academic collaborators, the SSC agreed that a vision for a truly multidisciplinary field needs to be created. —work the SSC has already started within the OH focus area. Una OH has run an own foresight workshop series that included scenario planning towards 2050. To expand the narrow concept of Una Europa OH, it was suggested to expand Una Europa OH to Una Planetary Health. The concept of **Scenario workshop formats** could also be scaled other Una Europa focus areas to build community.

Una Europa Internationalization

In addition to collaboration on European level, OH researchers considered global collaboration—particularly with African actors—extremely important. The OH network already possesses substantial expertise in building meaningful collaborations that add value for all parties rather than burden partners with unsustainable or ineffective assistance. This knowledge thus should be taken into account when developing the Una Europa's international collaborations.

Collaboration with Non-Academic Partners

Initially, the discussion about key non-academic partners focused on the private sector, mainly pharmaceutical companies. However, in the course of the discussion also institutions such as the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) were named as important collaborators. In addition, possibilities to attract venture capital for OH-start-ups were discussed. Participants agreed that concept of One Health needs to be well communicated to increase awareness of the concept among collaborators and venture capitalists.

A strategic question that remains open concerns the question of how to support Una Europa ecosystem building in a sustainable way. How much support and initiative should be provided by Una Europa (i.e., Una Europa vzw with Una resources provided by the universities) and how much by university services? Should the initiative of for example reaching out to the ECDC be taken by Una Europa vzw or the SSC?

Data Management: Challenge to Collaboration

Similar to the Una.Resin R&I Strategy Workshop, OH researchers lamented the difficulties of data management and data sharing in general and across institutions.

Una Europa for Early Career Researchers

Participants agreed that Una Europa should focus on early-career researchers, though it was emphasized that senior researchers are also needed to build sustainable and fruitful networks. Una Europa could enable early career researchers to diversify their networks by a) the mere virtue of the Una Europa community, which would allow low-threshold informal connections with colleagues from partner universities and b) by an ever-closer collaboration among the research services. Sharing infrastructures and ecosystems would also benefit early career researchers.

Several ideas were developed as to what a Una Europa training for PhD students could look like. It was suggested to provide training specialised in methods and funding opportunities to enhance multidisciplinary collaboration. Trainings would also support networking. The mobility of PhD students should also be funded. There are existing funding instruments which could be explored, for example Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, as well as national funding schemes for short and long-term research stays abroad. Una Europa could also fund 4-years scholarships with an opportunity to visit other Una Europa university. Co-finance open access publications and even start an PhD thesis series or Una Europa OH journal (targeted to young researchers but also others). It was also suggested to build Una Europa dissertation committees. Industry funded PhD-programs and training positions were mentioned as further options to benefit from common ecosystem.