

Sustainability

Introducing the Focus Area

A holistic view of sustainable development

Sustainable development and climate protection are among the greatest global challenges of this century and will become focal points of academic research, education and university life in the decades to come. Una Europa's guiding principle towards Sustainability is a Whole Institution Approach and a holistic view of sustainable development according to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as proclaimed in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We aim to turn Una Europa into a single transnational campus that generates innovative cross-disciplinary knowledge not only between disciplines but also in interaction with society, to elaborate and foster the 2030 Agenda. This encompasses the aim to empower the next generation with climate literacy skills and make the 2030 Agenda part of daily life.

Una Europa offers a unique opportunity to tackle the crucial challenges outlined in the 2030 Agenda in an international, inter-institutional context, by bringing together and interacting with all disciplines of knowledge in the areas of Sciences, Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Engineering, Arts and Humanities.

Focus Areas:

Inspiration, not limitation

Una Europa's six Focus Areas – Cultural Heritage, Data Science and Artificial Intelligence, Europe and the World, Future Materials, One Health, and Sustainability and Climate Protection – reflect pressing global and societal challenges. Inherently interdisciplinary, they are designed to bring together experts in a wide range of fields to find new ways of collaboratively conducting the research of the future and forging new paths in education and societal outreach.

The Focus Areas are intended to inspire researchers, not limit them. No discipline is excluded from applying to secure Una Europa Seed Funding. We encourage novel and diverse perspectives on challenges broadly attached to the Focus Areas, proposing collaborative projects in research, education and societal outreach, from whichever fields these emerge.



Holger Dau

Chair,
Sustainability Self-Steering Committee
Email: holger.dau@fu-berlin.de



Case studies



Sample Seed Funding-supported projects in Sustainability

As with the Focus Areas themselves, these case studies are intended to provide inspiration only and are in no way indicative of research topics that are more likely to succeed in securing Una Europa Seed Funding in the future.

Project: ImprovEUorGlobe – The UN 2030 Agenda in the EU Trade Policy: Improving Global Governance for a Sustainable New World

Description: The EU positions itself as a major actor on the international scene by systematically founding its approach to the reform processes of rules and procedures of global economic governance on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda. The EU's trade policy thus appears the most articulate, complete and innovative in the world, producing advanced free trade agreements with highly relevant trade and sustainable development chapters. ImprovEUorGlobe provides a critical interdisciplinary overview of the SDGs-oriented EU trade policy, considering the participation of civil society in the shaping and implementation of the EU trade policy and tools.

Duration: January–July 2023

Funding: €36,000

Key contact: Filippo Fontanelli, University of Edinburgh
filippo.fontanelli@ed.ac.uk

Project: WASTE-TO-ENERGY PLANTS AS CARBON SINK- Exploring the feasibility of CO₂ capture applied to waste combustion

Description: The more than 500 waste-to-energy (WtE) plants operating in Europe are collectively responsible for over 100 Mtpa CO₂ emissions, making them attractive targets for CO₂ capture and storage (CCS). The project aims to establish a long-lasting cooperation on the topic, building on the existing expertise within Una Europa partners on CCS technologies, WtE flue gas treatment, and sustainability assessment of complex systems. A series of workshops has been organized to discuss key challenges in the integration of CCS and WtE (complexity of flue gas composition, variety of scale, public perception issues, opportunities for CO₂ utilization within WtE plants) and identify R&D priorities to be explored in future calls.

Duration: July 2020–March 2022

Funding: €9,000

Key contact: Alessandro Dal Pozzo, Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna
a.dalpozzo@unibo.it

Project: Recycle Enough? A Multi-Country Survey on Attitudes (REMCSA)

Description: This interdisciplinary project aims to determine the effectiveness of existing recycling programs, understand the determinants of recycling attitudes, and suggest ways to improve recycling at both stages in several European cities. The first part involves tracking recyclable items to check how many of them reach the designated recycling facilities. The second is a survey about consumers' willingness to recycle and how it depends on the information about the effectiveness of the recycling system. The proposal was envisaged as a long-term research program to provide the basis for further experiments, and inform a broad array of stakeholders, e.g. academics, professionals and policymakers.

Duration: May 2021–June 2022

Funding: €12,990

Key contact: Francisco Javier André Garcia, Complutense Universidad de Madrid
andre@ccee.ucm.es

[View more Seed-Funded projects](#)