



Re-UNITA project
Research for UNITA

Deliverable n° 7.6 -
Mentoring success stories
dissemination package

UNITO and UPPA



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* PU = Public; PP = Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services); RE = Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services); CO = Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Agency Services)

Abstract

By endorsing the approach of "fixing the system not the women", Re-UNITA partners have promoted support action schemes not only for women researchers but also for men, both juniors and seniors (who are involved in selection committees and governing bodies).

A common mentoring programme has been implemented in each university of the Alliance, to support researchers especially during the early stages of their academic career, through the exchange with senior fellows that can give advices for successful career management and suggest strategies to overcome potential cultural and structural barriers. Once the mentoring programme was defined, all the mentors appointed in the respective universities have been invited to attend a European meeting in Turin, organised by UNITO on September 2022, where they have defined a common approach to support their mentees.

After this first face-to-face event, regular online meetings have been organised (and are still being organised) for mentors, to encourage the sharing of their experiences with the mentees and to collect feedback from the ongoing mentoring process.

This program involves a mentoring relationship, during which each mentor will follow two mentees: monthly meetings are planned for each mentee, in-person or online at the participant's discretion (one individual meeting between mentor and individual mentees and one where each mentor will meet with both mentees, which also allows moments of peer-mentoring).

Matching has to be done following a transdisciplinary criterion, by pairing mentors and mentees who are not from the same research field, but rather belong to related scientific areas. This reduces possible conflicts of interest and encourage the creation of a separate and confidential space where it will be possible to discuss individual and institutional issues outside regular work relationships. Orientation and training session for mentors and mentees in November 2022 has been planned: basics of mentoring have been further discussed by all mentors and mentees in separate groups. Participant's expectations and reflections have been collected, and contact between mentors and mentee formally initiated after the meeting.

Three monitoring and evaluation moments have been decided: they will be conducted during the program through focus groups that will have taken place in February 2023, Fall 2023 and Spring 2024.

It has been demonstrated that mentoring relationships can be rich in many ways.

In this document, we present how we intend to exploit the programme set up in Re-UNITA to promote mentoring stories, their successes and points for improvement.

The planned dissemination work aims to help our institutions and the wider academic community to consider extending and adapting such a programme to encourage the integration of young female researchers.

By promoting the beneficial contribution made by this mentoring programme, we intend to contribute to the sustainability of this action, in order to make this challenge part of the core business of our establishments and of the UNITA Alliance.

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1. Promoting the program

1st phase of the dissemination phase -> promoting the program

Mentoring is a relationship in which a more experienced person (mentor) guides and advises a less experienced person (mentee) in order to support their career development. The mentor has a role of guide, support, role model and facilitator of change, in a relationship characterized by trust, openness and mutual exchange.

The program had 3 main objectives:

- Support the socialization of young researchers to the functioning of the academic and scientific world
- Support the micro-transitions and career choices that mentees face
- Help combat gender asymmetries by discussing prevailing cultures and practices in academia and your own discipline and their gender implications.

Within the relationship, the mentor had to support the mentees' awareness of the structures, practices and norms that animate the academic world, offering the mentees help in defining and refining their scientific and career perspectives, discussing the objectives together and the strategies necessary to face difficulties and design a development path. Furthermore, the mentoring relationship, both in the one-on-one exchanges between mentor and mentee and in the equal exchanges between mentees and mentors, allowed to discuss in a safe space how the difficulties encountered connect to the non-gender-neutral functioning of the academy and of science, in a path of shared self-reflexivity that helped to feel less alone and find response strategies together. This relationship has been built up during the so-called "pair meetings" that have been carried out monthly along all the mentoring period (starting from November 2022) and summarised during the **collective meetings** in each partners' University.

UNITA LEVEL strategy and activities

- Participation to a FOREU2 group & presentation of the action
- Presentation of an action on a common public FOREU2 Document
- Presentation of the action in UNITA Consolidation phase
- U*Night - Gender imbalances in Academia: launch of RE-UNITA MENTORING PROGRAMME 30/09/2022

30
SEPTEMBER
2022
10:00-11:00
ONLINE ON

Gender imbalances in Academia: launch of RE-UNITA MENTORING PROGRAMME

10:00-10:20 **Evidence on gender imbalances in European universities**
Sharing evidence on gender i(n)equality in science and research, drawing from the data collected within the RE-UNITA universities
Giuseppina Cerrato, Chemistry Department
Cristina Solera, Department of Culture, Politics and Society

10:20-10:40 **The Mentoring Program at RE-UNITA**
A brief presentation about mentoring and the programme that will be implemented
Giuseppina Cerrato; Cristina Solera

10:40-10:50 **Presentation of the mentees**
One mentee from each partner will share why they chose to participate in the program and their expectations
Domenico Sanseverino, Department of Culture, Politics and Society

10:50-11:00 **Question time**

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- Train the trainers' event in Torino (October, 6-7, 2022)



UBI

- 1st Collective Meeting - April 12th 2023
- 2nd Collective Meeting - November 15th 2023

UNIZAR

- Announcement for applicants as Mentors July 21st 2022

Universidad Zaragoza

iUNIZAR
Boletín diario informativo de la Universidad de Zaragoza

21/7/2022

INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN Y COOPERACIÓN | UNITA

Invitación a participar en un programa sobre mentorización en igualdad de género en el marco del proyecto europeo Re-UNITA

Se invita a solicitar su participación a aquellas personas interesadas en participar en un programa de mentorización en igualdad de género en la Universidad, dentro del marco del proyecto ReUNITA. Dicha participación, para un máximo de 4 mentoras y 8 mentorizadas, incluye un curso presencial para las mentoras en Turín los días 6 y 7 de octubre. La información sobre el proyecto, las personas que pueden participar (como mentoras o mentorizadas) y la forma de solicitar la participación se describen en el documento adjunto "Project presentation". El programa del curso presencial en Turín (con un prelujo on-line el 30 de septiembre) se describe en el documento "Day 1 2.3 programme_train for mentoring".

- Adjunto 1 (pdf)
- Adjunto 2 (pdf)

Categoría:

- ELECCION
- INFORMA
- INVESTIG. TRANSFER
- INTERNAC. COOPERACION
- INFORMA
- CONGRES

- 1st Collective Meeting - November 15th 2023



- 2nd Collective Meeting - February 27th 2023

UPPA

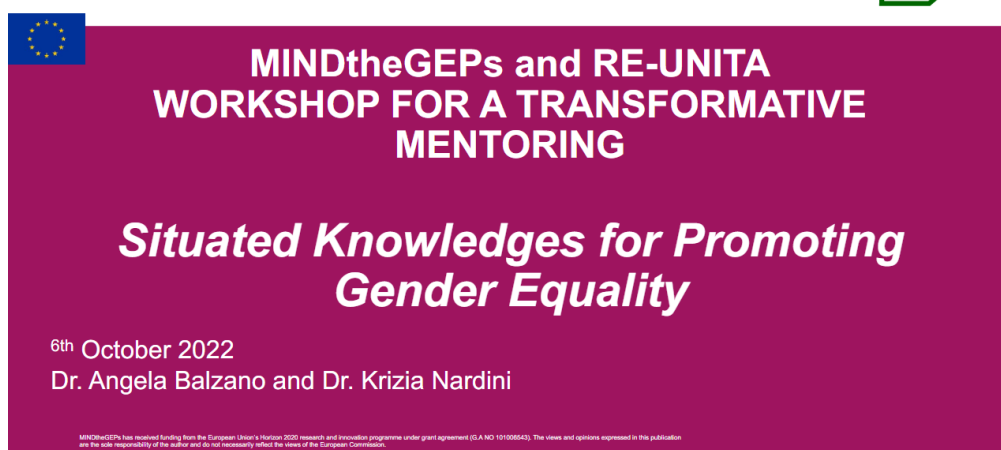
- Salle BULLe. Round table "Mentoring practices through UNITA and gender equality in academia academic world -February 14th
- 1st Collective Meeting - March 21st 2023
- 2nd Collective Meeting - December 18th 2023

USMB

- Launch Mentoring programme - January 16th 2024

UNITO

- Event at the University of Genova: Gender Equality Plan: esperienze a confronto - February 10th 2022 (presentation of the Task 3.4 of Re-UNITA as an example of good practice to fix the mentoring within the Academia)
- RE-UNITA & MINDTHEGEPS WORKSHOP FOR A TRANSFORMATIVE MENTORING (1 - 6 October 2022)



- RE-UNITA & MINDtheGEPs WORKSHOP - ATHENA MENTORING: TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMS TO CROSS (AND CHANGE) - THE GLASS LABYRINTH OF SCIENCE - October 7th 2022

- Mentoring Programme 1° collective meeting - Department of Cultures, Politics and Society. University of Torino. 06/12/22
- Mentoring Programme 2° collective meeting - Department of Cultures, Politics and Society. University of Torino. 08/06/23
- Mentoring Programme 3° collective meeting - Department of Cultures, Politics and Society. University of Torino. 16/01/24

2. Promoting the participants and the lessons learnt

UNITA LEVEL strategy and activities

To promote the participants in the mentoring programme and the activities of Task 3.4, the leaders of the task are organising an half-day online webinar entitled “Online Webinar to close our adventure! Mentoring: Success stories”: it will take place at the beginning of June 2024. The date will be decided during the next Task 3.4 general meeting that will be held in March 2024. The tentative program of the event considers a brief introduction about the aims of the Task 3.4 by the WP3 leader (G. Cerrato), a summary about the mentoring programme acted in the UNITA partners’ institutions (C. Solera, Task 3.4 leader), a summary of the activities and the relevant results obtained by the mentoring programme (N. Cipriani), but the core of the webinar will be focused on the the storytelling from pairs of mentors/mentees from each partners’ University and the relevant “lessons” learnt during the pairing experiences (including the possible effects on their training and careers).

The webinar will be attended by Prof. Giuseppina Cerrato, WP3 coordinator who will introduce the Task 3.4 of the Project and its aims, Prof. Cristina Solera who will introduce the Mentoring programme and the GeP, Dr. Anastassja Cipriani who will talk about the activities supported by all partners within the Task 3.4.

As a central part of the event, pairs of Mentors and Mentees from each partner university will be invited to learn how these activities have influenced their training and careers.

The webinar will be open to the entire academic community of the University of Turin and the entire UNITA community (founders and new members) as well in order to reach all the academic communities within the Alliance.

Moreover, another action aimed at promoting the Mentoring programme, and the activities of Re-UNITA Task 3.4 as well, will be the collection of interviews with Mentor & Mentee pairs in each partners' University. These interviews, in the form of either an article, or video interviews, or podcast recordings, or else, will be shared and publicised on the new Re-UNITA website, the social network pages of the UNITA project and on the websites of the ReUNITA partner universities as well.

A general and very important spin-off from Task 3.4 of the WP3 of Re-Unita is connected with the UNITA Consolidation phase project: to this purpose, the activities planned for the Mentoring programme (in the general framework of the Gender Equity program of the UNITA alliance) have been embedded in the Task 2.1 (*UNITA sustainable policies for students and staff*) of the UNITA Consolidation phase project. In particular, the Task 2.1 partially relies on some of the achievements of the Re-UNITA project (notably the HRS4R, -the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers certificate ongoing exercise, and the Mentoring programme). The 2.1 Task will introduce the new partners to the achievements and lessons learned from RE-UNITA and will implement initiatives for staff and students to strengthen their commitment in developing new ideas and playing an active role in the Alliance. A general meeting of the Task will take place in Zaragoza (March, 20-21, 2024 in presence to share the results achieved and to “lay the foundations” for future activities as well.

UBI

Collection of interviews with Mentor and Mentee pairs in each partner university, aimed at promoting the mentoring programme and Re-UNITA activities Task 3.4.

UNIZAR

Collection of interviews with Mentor and Mentee pairs in each partner university, aimed at promoting the mentoring programme and Re-UNITA activities Task 3.4.

UPPA

Collection of interviews with Mentor and Mentee pairs in each partner university, aimed at promoting the mentoring programme and Re-UNITA activities Task 3.4.

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Collection of interviews with Mentor and Mentee pairs in each partner university, aimed at promoting the mentoring programme and Re-UNITA activities Task 3.4.

UNITO

Collection of interviews with Mentor and Mentee pairs in each partner university, aimed at promoting the mentoring programme and Re-UNITA activities Task 3.4.

The Task leaders (UNITO) are organising an half-day online webinar entitled “Online Webinar to close our adventure! Mentoring: Success stories”: it will take place at the beginning of June 2024

The poster features the UNITA logo (universitas montium) and the European Union flag with the text 'Co-funded by the European Union'. The main title is 'Re-UNITA Task 3.4 Online Webinar to close our adventure! Mentoring: Success Stories!'. Below the title is a QR code and the text 'follow the event through the Qr code!'. At the bottom, there is an illustration of three people in a meeting and logos for partner universities: UNIVERSITA DI TORINO, UNIVERSITÉ SAVOIE MONT-BLANC, UNIVERSIDADE BEIRA INTERIOR, UNIVERSITÉ DE FERRANDE, West University, and Universidad Zaragoza.

UVT

Collection of interviews with Mentor and Mentee pairs in each partner university, aimed at promoting the mentoring programme and Re-UNITA activities Task 3.4.

Conclusion

Up to February 2024, the main actions dedicated to mentoring programme has been the monitoring and facilitation of the mentoring relationship, and the promotion of this kind of program to empower young female researchers.

From February to August 2024, the second phase of our programme is launched, knowing the promotion of the benefits identified from mentors and mentees.

From the collective meetings organized in each university in order to monitor this programme, we can identify the key lessons learnt, shared by mentors and mentees:

From mentees:

- Young female researchers benefiting from female senior researchers can address specific careers challenges and barriers linked to their gender with a female senior researcher. Some questions they address in this unformal relationship couldn't be addressed in another professional relationship
- In some research fields, young researchers (female or male) can feel isolated, and outside from the university community. Having a mentor provide them a relationship facilitating their integration in the university schemes, institutional organization and non-formal working groups.
- Tackling these first years' challenges, sometimes difficult to handle for young researchers, the participation in the mentoring program and its interdisciplinary approach is an opportunity to get to know with other research fields young researchers and enhance interdisciplinarity.
- Professional career development paths are sometimes complex in our HEI. This mentoring program can be an interesting tool to enhance the career progression of female researchers, by sharing key insights on how to boost career development from senior female researchers.

From mentors:

- Some experienced researchers share their delight at being able to 'connect' with young researchers and learn from them through a very warm relationship.
- The mentors express a feeling of gratitude that their experience is useful, and feel that they are providing help that they would have liked to receive.

- Taking part in a interdisciplinary programme is an opportunity for mentors to discuss and exchange ideas with researchers from other disciplines. The question of gender, career progression and the differences between disciplines are subjects they enjoy tackling together.

This communication and dissemination activities will be based on the main feedbacks and stories collected within the program, trying to scale up this program in each of our universities, and within UNITA Alliance as a whole.

Also, our participation in special European working groups on gender equity in research will be a great opportunity to share these results and success stories.

Finally, the integration of this programme in UNITA consolidation phase activities and objectives highlighted our will to sustain our efforts to reduce gender inequity in research careers and facilitate the integration of young researchers path, though several kind of tools, including mentoring relationships program.