Call for UNITA infrastructures grants

Introduction

The UNITA Alliance is pleased to announce a call for grants to support the technical and experimental community building actions within our institutions.

This initiative aims to foster collaboration, enhance scientific capabilities, and promote scientific training within the alliance.

This call is launched within the UNITA Alliance Erasmus + funding (2023-2027).

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1. Background

a. UNITA

The UNITA Alliance, established during its first phase (2020-2023), has initiated a significant transformation in its member universities. This transformation has continued through the second phase (2023-2027) and is expected to continue beyond, integrating new and associated partners. Our long-term vision is to revolutionize cooperation, education, research, innovation, and societal engagement within the European Higher Education Area.

b. UNITA Thematic Hubs

The scientific identity of the UNITA Alliance is centered around six core thematic areas:

- Circular economy and environment;
- Cultural heritage;
- Digital transition;
- Global health;
- Green energies;
- Inclusive societies.

Our goal is to develop these themes into future European research institutes, fostering collaboration based on shared strengths and resources.

c. Shared infrastructures

Building on the Re-UNITA project (2021-2024), the UNITA Alliance aims to pool research and innovation resources. This includes all types of research equipment, infrastructures, services, and resources.

A catalogue of shared resources and local contact points has been established to facilitate this initiative.

UNITA SHARED INFRASTRUCTURES CATALOGUE

https://reunitaresearchinfrastructure.i3a.es/

A formal strategic agreement has been signed on October 30, 2024, by UNITA rectors, to support this initiative.

2. Objectives

This call aims to:

- Enhance technical and scientific training on specific research resources;
- Enable community building and academic staff work on multi-partners projects;
- Address gaps in infrastructure and specialized training;
- Make proposals for long term solutions;
- Facilitate the access to infrastructures and resources hosted by other UNITA institutions.

3. Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be academic staff belonging to one of the UNITA institutions during the planned activities. Priority will be given to early-stage researchers.

The applicants cannot be funded under UNITA Advanced Grants.

Members of UNITA Starting grants are eligible, only if the UNITA STARTING GRANT funding is over and justified not sufficient.

4. Activities to be Funded

- **On-site mobilities** in order to develop common actions and collaborations based on scientific and technical equipment and expertise.
- **Scientific and Technical training**: Training dedicated to the use of specific resources, known as "Scientific and technical job shadowing."
- Projects must be connected to UNITA hubs thematic areas

5. Budget management

a. Global budget framework

Each institution manages its own budget to support its staff to carry out the planned activities in other universities.

b. Eligible expenses

Note: The maximum amount per application is € 5 000.

- **Travel and accommodation costs are eligible.**
- **Consumables - excluding research ones.**
- **Technical training costs**: Cover expenses related to training activities.

To be noted:

- Use of UNITA funds to cover research consumables or operating costs are considered ineligible. additional expenses linked to research consumables may be considered by local institutions, on case-by-cases basis. Applicants can contact their local UNITA OFFICES (see emails below) for further precision.
- Salaries of people who come to use the equipment are not eligible.

6. Conditions of Use

Applicants must ensure compliance with the specific conditions of use for each equipment, infrastructure, or resource, as provided by the hosting institution.

7. Calendar

- Opening on October 2026 and closing on July, 15th 2027.

8. Eligibility and Selection criteria

Applications must involve at least two different partners from the UNITA alliance to be eligible for funding. The scientific added value of the project must be clearly explained. The project should include a detailed schedule for experiments and mobility planned.

The selection of eligible applications will be based on the following criteria:
- added value;
- collaboration prospects;
- grant amount requested in accordance with the planned activity;

Selection will be made during monthly meetings of the UNITA Task team 4.3, including at least one representative from each UNITA institution. Applicants will receive a response (positive or negative) shortly thereafter.

To be evaluated, projects must include, in their application:
- Agreement from the parties (researchers);
- Agreement of the host institution laboratory' head;
- Schedule of activities;
- Budget breakdown.

9. Reporting

Any project that has received funding must submit a final report (1 to 2 pages maximum) including the following elements: key results, future collaborations, involved persons, and expenses.

This report must be sent to the co-leaders of task T4.3 and UNITA Offices. A template will be provided.

10. Acknowledgement

Funded activities must acknowledge UNITA funding in all related communications, including scientific publications. The following statement should be included:

"Supported by the UNITA Alliance Infrastructures grants and the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union."

The inclusion of the UNITA and European Union logos is also required for any oral communication or poster presentation.

11. Applications

Applications should be submitted through this form: https://surveysbg.univ-unita.eu/index.php/572135?lang=en

In case of questions, you can contact:

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