



D08.8 – Web space for alumni network activities

Work Package: 08 – Linking Local Ecosystems
Dissemination level: public
Arqus II - Arqus Erasmus + Work Plan 2022-2026
(Project number: 101089551)

Due date: September 2024.
Submission date: September 2024.

Authorship credit: WG08 members from partner universities of Arqus II.
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ALUMNI

Current students and Alumni are at the heart of the Alliance's activities – the participation and engagement of all can be promoted in multiple ways. Arqus Alliance follows a path of engagement of Alumni and current students as change agents, empowering them as leaders, enhancing the Alliance experience through collaboration, partnerships between all the stakeholders.

ARQUS ALUMNI NETWORK

Creating an alumni network involves building a strong community of former students (Alumni) who stay connected with each other and their alma mater. In the universe of Arqus Alliance this community takes on a new dimension, with graduates who are specialists in several fields of knowledge and professionalism and who have the opportunity to be connected. A series of activities are organised to successfully increase the involvement of alumni and students from nine Arqus partner universities.

ALUMNI INITIATIVES IN THE ARQUS INSTITUTIONS

To better understand the initiatives offered by the universities within the Alumni community, a specific questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire includes various questions related to: I) - ALUMNI Mentoring Programmes, II) - ALUMNI Networks for Graduates, III) - Events for ALUMNI Community, IV) - Other ALUMNI Activities and V) - Suggestions for new actions to be promoted in ARQUS II.

Six universities responded to the survey: University of Minho (Portugal), University of Leipzig (Germany), University of Lyon 1 (France), University of Vilnius (Lithuania), University of Padua (Italy) and University of Maynooth (Ireland).

- Questionnaire for Arqus partner universities [Survey ALUMNI Initiatives](#)
- The complete responses can be found in the following document: [Responses ALUMNI Initiatives](#)

The table below provides a summarised overview of the information provided by these universities and identifies relevant initiatives developed by Arqus partner Universities, such as:

- I- ALUMNI Mentoring Programmes
- II- ALUMNI Networks for Graduates
- III- Events for ALUMNI Community

MAPPING OF ALUMNI INITIATIVES IN THE ARQUS INSTITUTIONS								
I ALUMNI Mentoring Programmes			II ALUMNI networks for graduate (Linkedin, Graduway, etc)			III Events for the ALUMNI community (Annual meetings, Alumni talks, Conferences, etc)		
UNIVERSITY OF MINHO Contact: Carla Rocha carla@dps.uminho.pt ; Íris Saraiva iris.saraiva@gpe.uminho.pt								
UMinho Mentoring Programme	UMinho International Mentoring	International Mentoring Programme - IMFAHE (International Foundation for the Advancement of Higher Education)	Alumni CRM	Linkedin Alumni UMinho Group	-	Alumni Annual Reunion	-	-
UNIVERSITY OF LEIPZIG Contact: Susanne Benko, susanne.benko@zv.uni-leipzig.de								
Mentoring programme "Inspiration, Training, Networking"	-	-	Linkedin Account Leipzig University	Linkedin Group "Mentoring Universität Leipzig"	Netzwerk Leipzig Alumni (alumni portal)	Alumni panels, e.g., "Languages wanted: professional options for language students"	FÜR und MIT Alumni (For and with Alumni)	De-central Alumni meetings
UNIVERSITY OF LYON 1 Contact: Geraldine Yon, geraldine.yon@univ-lyon1.fr								
-	-	-	-	-	-	Linkedin for all our Alumni	-	-
UNIVERSITY OF VILNIUS Contact: , stefania.coppo@unipd.it								
VU mentoring programme	The mentoring public lecture series "Trust the Experience"	-	VU Alumni platform	-	-	-	-	-
UNIVERSITY OF PADUA Contact: Stefania Coppo, stefania.coppo@unipd.it								
UNIPD Mentoring Programme by Career Service	-	-	Alumni DATA BASE	Alumni SOCIAL ACCOUNTS	Alumni-NEWSLETTER	Alumni-STORIES	Alumni ANNUAL MEETING	Alumni OPEN TALKS
UNIVERSITY MAYNOOTH Contact: Niamh Fitzgerald, alumni.office@mu.ie								
Alumni Mentoring Programme	-	-	Salesforce	LinkedIn	Maynooth Alumni Advisory Board	Annual Alumni Reunion	Annual Christmas Carol Service Alumni Reception	-

ARQUS ALUMNI TALKS

What is it?

Arqus Alumni Talks is an online event in an informal atmosphere bringing together former (alumni) and current students of an Arqus Alliance university.

This initiative was created in 2014 with the close collaboration of the ALUMNI Services at each university.

Why?

Alumni Talks series aims to support current students and graduates in dealing more effectively with the professional challenges that await them. The sessions, organised by experts from the different Arqus universities, will focus on topics such as integration into the labour market, entrepreneurship, career progression, soft skills and others.

These talks often provide valuable networking opportunities and offer guidance on career paths, industry trends, personal development and how to navigate life after graduation.

Where? When?


Alumni Talks will be held in an online synchronous format and will last between 45 and 60 minutes.



The next Alumni Talk will be announced on the Arqus website and on websites of each partner institution.

Organised sessions

The recordings will be available on the Arqus YouTube channel:

(<https://www.youtube.com/arqusalliance>)

ARQUS ALUMNI TALK					
Date	Institution	Topic	Recorded Session To make available on the Arqus website/YouTube	Announced on the Arqus web site	Contact
					
28 February	University of Minho	Stress Management and High Performance	https://we.tl/t-Ekh6HKOR Aj	https://arqus-alliance.eu/news/arqus-alumni-talks/	Carla Rocha carla@dps.uminho.pt

				
27 March	University of Padova	How to make your (entrepreneurial) dreams come true	https://youtu.be/H3OgkXBbjpg?si=r-kcSJTyhFLyXen-/	https://arqus-alliance.eu/event/arqus-alumni-talks-2/ Stefania Coppo stefania.coppo@unipd.it
				
16 April	University of Padova	Alchemy of Passions: How to make your startup known	https://youtu.be/cSj1WjbgFSA?si=pkJeGvZIWorOnPWJ	https://arqus-alliance.eu/event/arqus-alumni-talks-3/ Stefania Coppo stefania.coppo@unipd.it

Do not miss the next alumni talk!

Each university can propose the next Alumni Talk by filling in the following form <https://forms.gle/26344ZMoVArfvnqV6> or contact Carla Rocha (carla@dps.uminho.pt)

- Alumni Talk, University of Granada (*planning in progress*)
- Alumni Talk, University of Padova and University of Maynooth (*planning in progress*)

ALUMNI MENTORING PROGRAMME

The Arqus Alumni Mentorship Programme is an innovative initiative designed to connect alumni of Arqus universities or Arqus activities, with current students and recent graduates from Arqus partner universities. Regardless of their field of study or current profession, alumni offer mentorship, career guidance, and networking opportunities to support students as they transition into the professional world, particularly in transnational contexts.

The mentorship programme is a unique opportunity for Arqus alumni to contribute to the professional growth of future generations. By sharing their experiences, mentors embody the Arqus core values of academic excellence, mobility, and societal engagement, helping mentees develop essential skills, make informed decisions, and work toward their personal and professional goals.

In order to complement and differentiate it from the mentoring programme implemented under WP04, a new mentoring “Turning Ideas into Businesses” programme was created.

1ST EDITION: MENTORING PROGRAMME - TURNING IDEAS INTO BUSINESSES - 2024

<https://arqus-alliance.eu/call/bip-mentoring-programme-turning-ideas-into-businesses/>



This initiative was created in 2024, with the collaboration of five Arqus partner universities: University of Minho (organiser), University of Granada, University of Leipzig, University of Maynooth and University of Vilnius. It was aimed to be disseminated and replicated in various institutions with a view to exploring and linking local ecosystems.

This Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) was created focusing on mentoring, using a methodology to transform ideas into businesses by leveraging and materialising ideas, particularly those based on technology and intensive knowledge, which can be developed in university innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems. The methodology is based on 4 interconnected stages in which the business idea is validated: 1) validation of the value proposition, 2) market & industry validation, 3)

validation of the business model and strategy and 4) economic and financial validation [\(see the booklet here\)](#)

The BIP Turning Ideas into Businesses started online in May 2024 with weekly synchronous and asynchronous sessions before the on-site activities in June 24-28, in the city of Guimarães (Portugal). Students and staff from different partner universities, namely Maynooth and Granada Universities, participated. ARQUS Alumni participated in the seminars and mentoring activities both online and in-presence. Particularly, Alumni from UMinho, ULeipzig and UVilnius. A total of 39 students completed the BIP successfully.

On-site programme (24-28 of June):

http://www.dps.uminho.pt/uploads/PROGRAM_24-28%20JUNE%202024_final.pdf

Experienced teachers, key players of UMinho's innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem, invited speakers and alumni contributed to different activities. Master classes, seminars, on-site visits, mentoring and training offered the students a rich and immersive programme.

Modules	Weeks	Synchronous Sessions	Description
ALL and 1	week 1	2 hours	Presentation and Overview
1	week 2	2 hours	Innovation, Creativity and Value Proposition
2	week 3	1,5 hours	Client Development
2	week 4	1,5 hours	Market Analysis
3	week 5	1,5 hours	Businesses Model Design
3	week 6	1,5 hours	BM Development and Strategy
4	week 7	1 hour	Economic and Financial Assessment
4	week 8	1 hour	Business Launching and Management
ALL	week 9	in presence	
ALL	week 10	x	Submission of Final Report and Pitch (Video)

	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	All
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Welcoming and overview	Master Class 1	Master Class 2	Master Class 3	Master Class 4	Presentation and Discussion
**	Case study	Case Study	Case Study	Case Study	Lunch Break
Team building activity	Lunch Break			Group Work	
	Group work	Group work	Group work	Innov. & Entrepr Ecosystem	Social Event

In this course, a series of online and in-person masterclasses, workshops and activities were offered, focusing on Turning Ideas into Businesses, particularly those that are technology intensive or knowledge based, through a process or a path of several interchangeable and recursive steps where a set of tools and techniques can be used to speed up, aiming to increase the potential and the sustainability of new

products or start-ups. To achieve these objectives, there are important concepts and tools that can be used through business design processes based on several approaches such as design thinking, lean start-up and the 4 validations model proposed in this course. These concepts, tools and approaches were presented, applied and tested using examples, case studies, selected short videos, etc.; in both the face-to-face activities developed in Guimarães and during the online sessions (synchronous and asynchronous). A project developed by the students as group work in the in-presence week contributed with a hands-on approach perspective. It resulted in a very interesting and rich experience considering the very international group of participants and mentors, students and alumni, university staff and partners from the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem of University of Minho. At the end of the course, some final remarks, the most important lessons learned and opportunities for networking and further joint work were highlighted. The content and activities for each online lesson were organised in a series of blocks for synchronous interaction and materials for asynchronous work. Each lesson was based on a specific plan and the support of several mentors. All information is made available from the UMinho's moodle e-learning platform.

Application form for Teaching and Mentoring:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf4ZEltwwcs5IcQVq-uNK8fhgcnTBXe4NI26ifARX-JJsCp8w/vi/ewform?usp=sf_link (1st edition)

Application form for Students:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScAYyAHiaPwEd-5H8GZmaHvaBFNq-npk4hTXzLoPKWurXaxBg/viewform?usp=sf_link (1st edition)

STAFF MOBILITY WEEK ON INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS – 2024

The main purpose of the Staff Mobility week on Innovation and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems was to provide participants with the knowledge and tools to understand, develop and implement effective innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems in universities and learn from sharing the experience and the vision of the participants on such ecosystems, promoting the creation of synergies, partnerships and networking in this domain.



They were offered master classes, seminars, on-site visits and training covering the different dimensions of the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem of University of Minho and its partners.

The programme was guided by mentors experienced on innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly on strategies and processes to turn university-based intensive knowledge and technologies into products and services, with impact in the community. The participants in this international staff week are members of the academic community, looking to improve their understanding and contributions to more effective and collaborative innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems linking universities and industry in different countries.

A total of 31 staff members participated. Five master classes were delivered as well as several visits, meetings and workshops with partners of the University Innovation and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem. Several Alumni and mentors gave their contribution in more than 10 different locations in both cities of Braga and Guimarães. Namely, in the SetUp Guimarães, StartUp Braga incubator, the UMinho's spin-off

“Cerveja Letra”, The Municipality of Guimarães, the interface organisations TecMinho and CCG/ZGDV, etc.



Guilherme Pereira, Pro-Rector: Institutional Assessment and Special Projects (Job Search Platform, Alumni Relations), UMinho



Paulo Silva, ALUMNI, Municipal Councilor, The Municipality of Guimarães

Photos of both events are available here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/3/folders/1Ka3Acd8WOGwakQYU99Hii3EHWQxgrWGR>

ARQUS INNOVATION FUND

2023 - Approved but without funding.

2024 - Submitted and waiting for the result.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WEBSITE

A [webpage for Arqus Alumni](#) was created on the Arqus website as part of the “Our Communities” menu. The webpage, for the moment, contains three aspects:

- a brief description and link to the Arqus Alumni Mentoring Programme
- a section on the Alumni Talks, which provide Arqus students with insights into potential future career opportunities, presented in videos by alumni of Arqus universities.
- a link to the Networking feature for alumni created in the Arqus Plaza by WG12, as part of the Arqus Partnering Platform, which is described in detail in D2.2 Arqus Partnering Platform (see also Technical Annex). The networking feature allows alumni to create personal profiles, to describe their networking interests and to join a forum for alumni where they can share activities with other alumni.

The webpage will be further populated with contents as the Arqus Alumni community develops and new activities take place.

PLANNING IN PROGRESS

2ND EDITION: MENTORING PROGRAMME - 2025

Contacts: Carla Rocha/Paulo Afonso, erasmus@dps.uminho.pt

STAFF MOBILITY WEEK ON INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS - 2025

Contacts: Carla Rocha/Paulo Afonso, erasmus@dps.uminho.pt

ARQUS ALUMNI TALKS

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CO-LEAD WG08, UNIVERSITY OF MINHO

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