EAIR forum 2025

Conference theme "*Openness: a Mission Challenged*"

Hosted by [Utrecht University](#)

Universities are vital and resilient institutions with a high degree of adaptability. They are seen as core institutions of an open society, a condition and foundation for open, democratic, fair and sustainable societies.

In their [mission](#), they commit to the principles of open science as to conduct research in open connection with society and aim to educate their students with an open mind and open attitude.

Openness, open borders, an open higher education system, is recognized as a necessary condition for universities to collaborate internationally and to contribute to solving global challenges.

However, [openness](#) cannot any longer be taken for granted in the changing political and global context. Illiberal trends, geo-political tensions and related security concerns jeopardize institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and opportunities for collaboration. This weakens universities' ability to play their role as core institutions in open and democratic societies and in the wider global context.

Conference Tracks

1. Governance & management

How can academic freedom and institutional autonomy be upheld in a world in which openness is being challenged and the core values of universities are under strain? Which dilemmas are university leaders facing in defending their mission and commitment to openness and how can they address these? How is the national policy context affected and how are governmental policy makers responding?

2. Teaching & Learning

How to pursue an [open education](#) approach, engage students in society and stimulate an open mind and attitude? What are the related key innovations and how to develop resilience to

the role of social media, fake news, and where to find a baseline for values in higher education? How to support teaching staff to navigate sensitive topics in class discussions?

3. Research policy

How is [open science](#) affecting research methods, as well as interactions within the scientific community?   How is research assessment addressing the dynamic balance between excellence and impact? How are pressures from research security and publishers' interests affecting academic integrity? How are the emerging approaches to academic recognition & reward (DORA & CoARA) PhD training and (early) research careers?

4. Quality assurance

How is openness in science and education affecting quality in research, education, and performance in impact, leadership, team science and patient care? What to evaluate and use innovative approaches (e.g. peer observation in teaching). How is this working out on the research - teaching balance, faculty well-being, connection to society, work pressure, diversity, and professional autonomy?

5. Internationalization

How will internationalization evolve when Open Systems are under siege, borders are closing, and national security enhanced? How to sustain academic cooperation & mobility under such new circumstances? How is the EU, a strong proponent of Openness, changing its policies and what are consequences for those at national level? How are countries responding and how does this affect university alliances in Europe and beyond?

6. Digitalisation

How will the indispensable role of technology in opening up teaching and research evolve: from learning analytics, to the next generation digital learning environments and the use of Artificial Intelligence? But what are the boundaries and who defines these? How to deal with the implications for governance, data security, management, and ownership?