TRANSFORM’U
Draft of concept note

The CRI & Res publica propose the “TRANSFORM’U” programme, a system to support the transformation of higher education institutions in order to better train students for the world of tomorrow.

Tomorrow’s citizens must learn to act in a sustainable and inclusive way in a changing world. To prepare this generation and the next to fight climate change, protect biodiversity or tackle inequalities, higher education institutions (HEIs) must transform the way they learn, teach and do research. The European Universities Initiative recommends setting up interdisciplinary working modalities and project-based approaches to solve challenges in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to foster student inclusion and participation.

These transformations require HEI to adapt their strategies and must involve all actors of the academic community: students, teachers, administration, management and even stakeholders.

CRI and Res publica propose, based on their respective experiences (notably the organisation of the Convention Citoyenne du Climat), to prototype and then deploy a method and tools to help HEIs that wish to do so to develop their transformation strategy in a participatory manner, involving all their stakeholders. This process is designed to be implemented either autonomously or with the support of its designers.

The approach consists in organising a mechanism for the ideation, selection and implementation of actions that will enable HEIs to transform themselves. Each institution determines the theme(s) of work (chosen from the European Universities Initiative recommendations and/or SDGs) and the modalities of mobilisation of its stakeholders (all stakeholders, internal and external, can be mobilised or only a part, all actors can be invited to participate or groups can be formed, for example by drawing lots, etc.).

In concrete terms, the CRI and Res publica propose to make available an online “ready-to-use” co-construction platform with a kit for animating the different processes (from the ideation to the implementation). Initially, in the start-up phase in November 2020 to January 2021, several French (and possibly European) HEIs wish to experiment with this transformation device. The experience gained from the pilot cohort will allow, in a second phase, the deployment of the method on a national, European and then international scale, notably within the network of the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), which represents more than 1,000 universities around the world.