



Association for European
Life Science Universities

Promoting life sciences through education, research, and innovation



About ICA

Founded in 1988 as the Interfaculty Committee Agraria, ICA is an open network of more than 50 universities from the EU and neighbouring countries (European Higher Education Area). These universities focus on the life sciences relating to the circular bioeconomy, the sustainable use of natural resources, the protection of the environment and rural development.



ICA's Mission

To strengthen and promote European life science universities by:

- 1 Supporting and enhancing their education, research and innovation for a sustainable bioeconomy and society.
- 2 Providing platforms for cooperation, joint learning, and sharing experiences and understanding.
- 3 Representing and engaging our member with European institutions and networks.
- 4 Making the knowledge and experts of our members institutions available for transitioning to a sustainable bioeconomy and society across Europe and globally.

ICA Network

ICA is governed by the ICA General Assembly which comprises one representative from each Full Member Institutions. ICA Council and Board are supported by 3 ICA Board committees:

ICA European committee

This committee is central to implementing the "ICA strategy towards 2030" by initiating and maintaining interactions with European institutions, collecting and disseminating EU business intelligence, influencing agenda of the European Commission, identifying project opportunities for ICA members, developing ideas for thought pieces, and providing communication feeds.

ICA Network for Innovation in Life Sciences Higher Education

The committee aims to provide the opportunity to discuss innovative approaches in higher education in the sciences of agriculture, food, natural resources, rural development, and the environment.

ICA Board Committee: Community of Practice for Bioeconomy Education in Europe (ICA-CoP Bio-Edu)

The main objective of the committee is to enhance the quality, offer and diversity of education for the sustainable circular bioeconomy in Europe.

And supported by ICA-Edu Special Interest Group (SIG) for Sustainable Entrepreneurship Education in the Life Sciences. The committee addresses the expectation for the new generation of bioeconomy graduates (agri-food, bio-based economy, and Life Science) to show creativity, resilience, sustainability orientation, pro-activeness and risk taking in a world that is characterised by uncertainty.

ICA is an umbrella organisation linking different ICA Standing Committees which either have a discipline or cross discipline support focus:

AGRIMBA:	International Network for the MBA in Agribusiness and Commerce
AGRINATURA:	The European Alliance on Agricultural Knowledge for Development
CASEE:	The ICA Regional Network for Central and South-Eastern Europe
ERABEE:	Network for Education and Research in Agricultural and
IFA:	ISEKI Food Association
IROICA:	International Relations Officers' Network of the Association of European Life Sciences Universities
I.S.L.E.:	Association for Innovation, Teaching and Sustainable Development in the Life, Applied and Social Sciences
SILVA:	European Forest Science Academic Network

- ICA liaises with other European and global networks such as Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations for Agricultural and Life Sciences (GCHERA) and international students associations, such like International Association of Students in Agricultural and Related Sciences (IAAS), International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA).
- ICA is developing other important partnerships with the European Working Groups and Eu-wide projects and their advisory boards.
- ICA is a member of the EC European Economic and Social Committee Leadership Group on Bioeconomy and Leadership Group on Biodiversity and Climate.
- ICA is supporting different kind of European Initiatives, such like: WUR-ICA Biodiversity Challenge, WUR Nature-Based Students Challenge, and BISC-e Bio-Based Innovation student Challenge Europe, etc.

ICA's Essentials

In implementing the vision and mission ICA needs to fulfil seven essentials:

- 1 The active engagement of ICA members and their scientist to benefit from and contribute to ICA's role in Europe and globally;
- 2 Maintaining intensive relations with actors in the European arena of science, policy, society and business;
- 3 The provision of thought leadership in the domain of the European sustainable bioeconomy;
- 4 A proactive public affairs policy presence in (social) media and in European and EU networks;
- 5 An effective governance system with a well-resourced and competent secretariat;
- 6 Strong concerted actions between the ICA Board, the ICA Board Committees, and the ICA Standing Committees;
- 7 Adequate funding and resources to achieve these essentials.

Benefits of ICA membership:

Networking: ICA provides a forum for members to develop their network, to share experiences, learn from each other.

Professional updating: ICA's conferences and workshops for researchers and university leaders serve as a forum to discuss innovative practice and concerns, and act as a clearinghouse for information exchange and updates on strategic issues. Moreover, ICA provides leadership in promoting innovative education curricula, and other student learning opportunities (e.g., exchange).

European dimension: ICA organises and promotes joint EU applications, supplies member institutions with EU information, and articulates the priorities for life science universities within the European Higher Education and Research Areas; agenda setting, research funding calls, thematic initiatives, and access to European networks, as well as influence on European strategy, policies, and research funding schemes.

Representation: ICA enables its members to participate or be represented in European and regional networks, European Standing Committees, and other relevant European institutions.

Intelligence services: ICA provides any other services to its members, such as reviews, advice regarding trends or changing needs in competencies, skills, employability, study programmes, lifelong learning demands, positions on research and innovation policy, etc.

How members contribute to ICA's success

- 1 University and Faculty senior management contribute to ICA's governance through participation in the ICA General Assembly and Nominate representatives for election to the ICA Board
- 2 University and Faculty senior management engage in ICA's activities and events
- 3 Members Contribute to the activities of the ICA Standing Committees and the ICA Board Committees through participation in events and election of members to the Board/Executive Committee of these bodies. These Committees actively seek to involve university staff that do not necessarily hold senior leadership positions.
- 4 Contribute to ad-hoc working groups to produce position papers and other thought-leadership documents.
- 5 Contribute to ICA intelligence services by sharing European or international information that may be of benefit to other ICA members.

ICA membership

Membership of ICA is open to higher education institutions which have a focus in the life sciences relating to the circular bioeconomy the sustainable use of natural resources, biodiversity, the protection of the environment and rural development.

How to become ICA member?

Read the guidelines and procedures here:

<https://www.ica-europe.info/join-ica>

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to us.

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