

Una Europa Live My Life 2026



Detailed description of positions

List of professional areas

Professional area	Sub-area name and/or description
Procurement, contracts and legal affairs	Professionals responsible for managing procurement procedures, institutional contracts and service agreements with external suppliers, public authorities and strategic partners. They ensure legal compliance, transparency and efficient use of institutional resources. Typical university units include Procurement Offices, Purchasing Services, Legal Services, Finance Divisions, Contract Management Offices, Research Contracts Offices, and Central Administration.
Data analytics and strategic planning	Professionals who collect, analyse and interpret institutional data to support strategic planning, quality enhancement and evidence-based decision making. Their work contributes to institutional performance monitoring, accreditation, research assessment and student success initiatives. Typical university units include Institutional Research Offices, Strategic Planning Offices, Quality Assurance Units, Business Intelligence Offices, Research Information Offices, Planning and Performance Divisions, Data Governance Offices, and University Management Support Services.
Student and staff inclusion, accessibility and wellbeing	Professionals dedicated to creating an inclusive, accessible and equitable university environment for students and staff. Their work supports equal opportunities, disability services, wellbeing and diversity policies across teaching, research and administration. These colleagues typically work in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Offices, Student Services, Disability Support Services, Human Resources (HR), Wellbeing Services, Counselling Services, Educational Support Centres, and Student Success Offices.



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People and organisational development	Professionals responsible for organisational development, staff learning and talent management. They design competency frameworks, leadership programmes, professional development initiatives and organisational change processes that support institutional strategy and workforce planning. Relevant organisational units include HR Departments, Learning and Development Offices, Organisational Development Units, Leadership Development Offices, People and Culture Divisions, HR Strategy Offices, Talent Management Units, and Staff Development Centres.
Research laboratories and technical services	Professional services and technical staff (non-academic staff) responsible for the management, organisation and technical operation of research and teaching laboratories, scientific equipment and shared research facilities. It does not include academic staff (e.g. professors, researchers, lecturers or postdoctoral researchers), whose primary role is research and/or teaching. Professionals in this area support high-quality research and education by ensuring the efficient functioning, maintenance and continuous development of laboratory infrastructures and technical services. Their responsibilities typically include organising laboratory activities, managing scientific equipment and instrumentation, coordinating maintenance and procurement, supporting researchers and teaching staff in the use of laboratory facilities, liaising with suppliers, monitoring expenditure, ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations, and contributing to the implementation of research projects and technological innovation. Colleagues usually work in Departments, Interdepartmental Centres, Core Facilities, Research Infrastructures, Centralised Laboratories, Experimental Facilities, Museums, and Technical Services Units.

List of challenge-based positions

Challenge 1: Artificial Intelligence in higher education: policies and practices

Across Una Europa partner universities, the integration of Artificial Intelligence – including generative AI – into academic and administrative life is raising new and complex questions. How do we guide its use in teaching, research, and operations? How do we build institutional frameworks that are both effective and inclusive? How do we ensure that staff and students are equipped to navigate this rapidly evolving landscape?

Each of our universities is responding to these challenges in its own way – at different speeds, with different emphases, and at varying levels of maturity. Some institutions are in the early stages of reflection; others have already developed formal policies and training programmes. This diversity is not a gap, it is an opportunity.



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This Live my Life challenge is open to professional staff who are actively involved in or contributing to their institution's approach to AI – whether in a legal, IT, project management, HR, or any other capacity. What matters is not your professional background, but your concrete engagement with this topic and your interest in learning from, and contributing to, the experiences of colleagues across the alliance.

Through this job-shadowing experience, participants will have the chance to observe how a partner university is approaching AI governance and literacy, exchange practices and perspectives, and contribute to an emerging alliance-wide conversation around shared guiding principles and a common AI literacy framework.

Challenge 2: Research security: Safeguarding open science in a contested world

As international collaboration becomes both more essential and more scrutinised, universities are increasingly called upon to protect their research assets, partnerships, and infrastructure without compromising the openness that drives scientific progress. How can we balance academic openness with the growing need to identify, assess, and mitigate risks arising from international cooperation? What structures and processes help institutions navigate due diligence, knowledge security, and compliance while remaining genuinely collaborative partners on the global stage?

Universities across Europe are at markedly different stages in addressing this challenge. Some have established dedicated research security offices or central points of contact; others are still building awareness, embedding first checks into existing research management or compliance workflows, or relying on ad hoc expertise. This diversity is not a shortcoming – it is an opportunity to learn from one another's approaches, tools, and lessons learned as institutions and European policy frameworks continue to evolve together.

This Live my Life challenge is open to professional staff actively engaged with research security in any capacity – whether through research management, international relations, legal and compliance, export control, data protection, or any other role that brings you into contact with these questions. What matters is your hands-on involvement, not your job title or department: this topic deliberately cuts across the 'usual' professional areas, and colleagues who have only recently taken on research-security-related tasks are just as welcome as long-standing specialists.

Through this job shadowing experience, participants will observe how a partner university structures its approach to research security, exchange practical tools and risk-assessment methods, and contribute to a shared, alliance-wide understanding of how to keep European research both open and secure.



Challenge 3: Health, safety and preparedness: Continuity of operations in a rapidly changing world

In the face of unprecedented global challenges, universities must prioritise health, safety and preparedness to ensure the continuity of their operations. How can we develop proactive strategies that address the wellbeing of students and staff? What frameworks can we implement to maintain operational effectiveness during crises while fostering a resilient university community?

As institutions navigate a constantly evolving landscape, they are at various stages of implementing safety measures and health initiatives. Some universities are still in the planning phases, while others have established comprehensive policies and response protocols.

This diversity is not a barrier; it is a chance to learn from each other's experiences and best practices.

This Live my Life challenge is available to professional services staff actively engaged in their university's health and safety infrastructure, whether in roles related to risk management, public health, emergency response, or any other relevant area. What counts is your hands-on involvement in these matters and your eagerness to collaborate with colleagues across the alliance.

Through this job-shadowing experience, participants will observe how a partner university is addressing safety, health, and preparedness, share insights and strategies, and contribute to a collective dialogue on effective operational continuity in times of change.

