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# Future UniLab

## **The integration visionaries team raport**

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Teams and Miro workplace 2021

# The cocktail university

We passionately support the enjoyment of science and the international integration of universities. We embrace the 'unfinishedness' both within and across our universities, and in our group's work. Our vision is not a replacement for your own thinking, rather it is to be approached as a creative and collective thinking exercise.

We hope that you read this material as if you were savoring a great cocktail - enjoying it, using your senses to identify its origin, ingredients and essence, and sharing the experience with others in a relaxed setting. Then feel free to go ahead, do a whole lotta shakin' and produce your very own visionary cocktail.

We do not, under any circumstances, accept responsibility for any damages, wild ideas or effects that result to yourself or anyone else due to the reading of this material or links attached to it.

#science #fun #internationalintegration #cocktail #unfinishedness #experiments  
#enthusiasm #doing

## **The structure of the report:**

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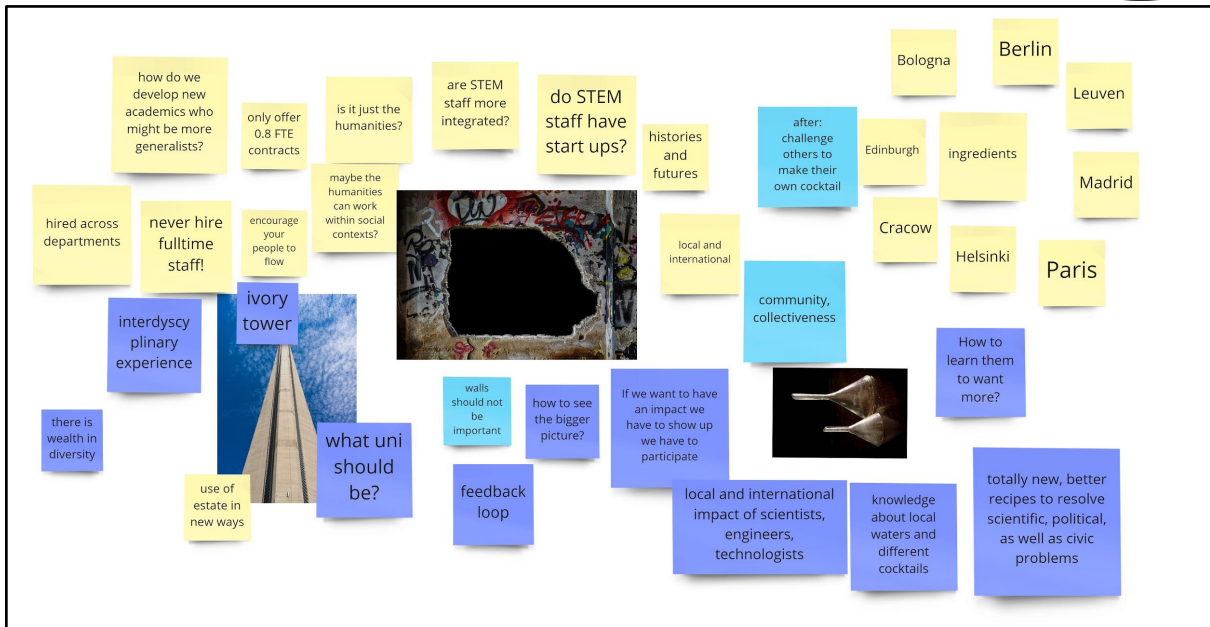


the jeopardy turned to serendipity, and in turn toward a memorable experience that is passed on through stories to family and friends. It is also a chance to develop deep relations, to integrate by work, make lasting friendships and to build a strong network of contacts and to understand the social roles.



The source of the pictures is pixabay.com. See bigger pic. as an Appendix 2.

The 'unfinished' circumstances that required the tourists to take control of their own experience became an important stepping stone toward our final metaphor for supporting integration in the university of the future - that of a cocktail. During discussions, the cocktail represented an interesting boundary object that, whilst distinct in its form (exotic, stimulating and offering adventure), evoked complex social and material processes that involved the mixing of different ingredients, cultures and forms. Handmade in real time, cocktails are often unpredictable and risky propositions that require the drinker to commit and take a position on. In groups, no one has the same cocktail, but everyone enjoys the difference allowing cocktail hour to remain an open and playful event during which experimentation and risk taking is encouraged toward a collective and enjoyable experience. Conversely we might compare the cocktail to lager or beer that is canned in factories, which are consistent in taste and appearance, but are repetitive and lack provenance to the brewers and source of ingredients. Canned lager doesn't inspire mixing, co-creation or integration with other drinks, they are simply convenient and highly efficient economic methods to 'push' a particular type of drink. With this in mind we prefer to think of universities as cocktails.



The source of the pictures is pixabay.com. See bigger pic. as an Appendix 3.

Aware of the less healthy implications of alcohol and its potentially dangerous effects, the positive aspects of cocktails became a metaphor for the group through which to envisage a process of designing them (**process**) and delivering them (**product**) toward a university experience that was integrated within wider social, cultural and economic ecosystems.



The source of the pictures is pixabay.com. See bigger pic. as an Appendix 4.

## 2. Internal work process

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the group worked as a fully remote team. Altogether the group had nine online meetings during September 2020 and January 2021. The use of a visual collaboration platform Miro enabled asynchronous ideation between the meetings and gave an experience similar to a physical workshop during the online meetings. The access to Miro was provided by one of the group members. In the end we also used a shared online document to summarize the group's work and our main findings in writing.

With the help of Miro, we were able to speed up the group's work as well as collect, visualize and store ideas in a platform available 24h. We used dual coding to develop our ideas further and give inspiration to each other: writing down post-its, adding photos beside them as open-ended metaphors, using frames and arrows to regroup our previous ideas.

The process of team building online was a time consuming part in the beginning of the project, yet it helped us through the team formulation phase and made it possible to build trust and find a common rhythm of the work. The reduction of team members and active participants of the process was difficult since we did not receive clear information about the changes in the composition of the team. Working in smaller groups, especially online, proved to be more efficient.

Another aspect to consider in the future is the question of shared goals and support. The group enjoyed working with full autonomy but sometimes the sense of direction was lost. When creating something new, these feelings are certainly an inevitable part of the process. Nevertheless, at times the group was confused about how the visionaries' work will benefit the implementation team and how to convey the message further and in what format. A highly recommendable addition in the future would be having a process facilitator taking care of the facilitation and general progress of the project.



A word cloud (photo on the left) was compiled to reflect the group members' experiences and feelings during the internal process. Despite some confusion and partial changing of team members, the overall experience was considered positive and encouraging.

Source: wordart.com

### 3. Unpacking the cocktail metaphor

Through key terms that correspond with the characteristics of learning, we offer a series of ideas toward healthy and integrated universities. Retaining the metaphor of the cocktail, we use a variety of ingredients to provide *process* and *product* to organise these ideas, and to provide the beginnings of a framework for implementation.

#### 3.1. Process:

How might we create a cocktail for the universities of the future?

##### Criticality

*It matters what ingredients are used and why - there are many possible solutions*

Cocktails are made of different ingredients. You can add and mix ingredients freely but to be able to repeat the process multiple times you need to be aware of the mixing methods used. Learning to think critically about the process is one of the university's core tasks as well as the ability to learn the lessons from these experiments. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the meaning of scientific methods, to be able to apply them, and to recognise when they are not being used.

##### Deliberation

*Disagreement about the taste and quality of a cocktail is vital*

Deliberation about the process of making, the composition and the final 'taste' of the cocktail is important to acknowledge difference. Thoughtfully weighing options across a group, usually prior to any final decisions. Deliberation emphasises the use of logic and reason which are vital parts of an academic experience, as opposed to a power-struggle. If universities are to be better at integrating within wider ecosystems, they need to allow more people in, to deliberate issues that affect everybody and let them feel welcome.

##### Expertise

*Why cocktails are not just invented everywhere*

Making a good cocktail involves quite a bit of (technical) expertise. In other words, it requires skilled professionals. This is the same for the university. We need to maintain balanced strengths both in specialists (who know a lot about a very specific field) and generalists (who have a more holistic perspective). This balance can be best obtained by being well integrated in society, because society requires both specialists and generalists to help universities be ambidextrous and ready for exploration and exploitation activities with high efficiency.

## Co-creation

### *It takes two (or more) to cocktail*

Many of the most popular cocktails are the result of fine-tuning an original recipe. The same should be true for the university of the future. The more people are involved in co-creating the university in all its activities, the better the product(s) the university has to offer can become. But it also means that universities have to build and develop a creative atmosphere and conditions to help in various kinds of creativity during the preparation of new recipes again and again.

## Time

### *Making original cocktails takes time*

The (old) idea of 'slow science' is valid more than ever. However, the same also applies for learning: it takes time, energy, and commitment to appropriate new insights and skills. It is also training in deep learning and the ability to concentrate on the project. Collaboration with fellow learners also exposes us to the time of others, those who are fast (drinkers) and slow (drinkers).

## Serendipity

### *Many new cocktails are made by error*

The history of science teaches us that many scientific discoveries and advances in science were made through trial and error. Oftentimes, failure leads to innovation. It is therefore important to factor risk in instead of trying to avoid it at all costs.

## Feedback loop

### *There is wealth in diversity of our local cocktails - locally and internationally*

Local and international impact of scientists, engineers, technologists through knowledge about "local waters" and different "cocktails" - totally new, better recipes to resolve scientific, political, as well as civic problems on the local level as well as on the international level. A new way, a new mindset to solve increasing wicked problems. The need for new canals of cooperation, exchange of recipes, experiences to develop frequency of common meetings.

## Ethics

### *Not only the best cocktails in taste*

Cocktails - nor universities - should be assessed or valued only in taste. Universities have an integral role in creating a socially just and sustainable world based on ethically sound and scientific methods. In a world filled with wicked problems without easy or quick answers and voices that question the reliability of science and the role of institutions, universities are challenged. In contrast, the need for truth and scientific thinking is even greater. Therefore, universities must commit to the principles of respect, truth and care for others and the environment in every aspect of their work.



## 3.2. Product:

What does the cocktail of the future (integrated universities) offer?

### Glocalization

*Even if a cocktail looks the same, it may taste differently*

As the scales at which we organize things only increases (e.g. universities coming together in larger international unities such as Una Europa), we should not forget the importance of the most basic/local scale, where many of the things that are agreed upon at higher levels (the recipe of the cocktail) need to be implemented.

### 'Branding'

*There are a lot of interesting cocktails out there*

In what they have to offer, universities are not only competing with other universities but also with other organizations offering similar products (e.g. online learning platforms, independent research institutes). We may have excellent things to offer to society, we also need to communicate in such a way so that people see the added value (as compared to competing products on the market).

### Adaptation

*Cocktail - mocktail*

Times change and universities should be flexible and adapt to the changing world in which they are in, and are firmly embedded. A cocktail may not be for everyone or for people of all ages, a mocktail offers an accessible and inclusive approach for learners (and drinkers) from all walks of life.

### Rankings

*When cocktailing goes wrong - lessons learned*

The science of mixology is more than the finished product of a cocktail. If we only look at how many great cocktails a mixologist has created, how many bars are selling those cocktails and how many specialists are consuming them, it will not tell us the whole truth of the field.

### Community

*A place for the community to learn and exchange ideas*

The university is a community. The same applies to bars where people go to enjoy their cocktails. You can make and drink cocktails at home, but when you go to a bar you want to enjoy the expertise of mixologists and meet with other people who are also interested in cocktails. Still, the cocktail lounge is open for everyone.

## 4. Questions

- What makes a good cocktail?
- How to recognise brilliant cocktails? -> thorny issue of “rankings” and who gets to decide what makes a “good” cocktail (value judgments)
- How do we assess cocktails? Do we even need to assess them?
- How do we find totally new tastes?
- What happens if you drink too many cocktails?
- What to do when we run out of some of the ingredients?
- How can we train other mixologists?
- How do we keep the team spirit in the bar?
- How do we develop positive gamification between bars (universities of Una Europa)?
- How can we push people to visit new bars (meet new universities and their students, scientists, and other organizations from the ecosystem)?
- How can we keep the quality of the bars and of the cocktails?
- ...

*Cocktail metaphor -> vaccines are also cocktails*

## 5. Appendix

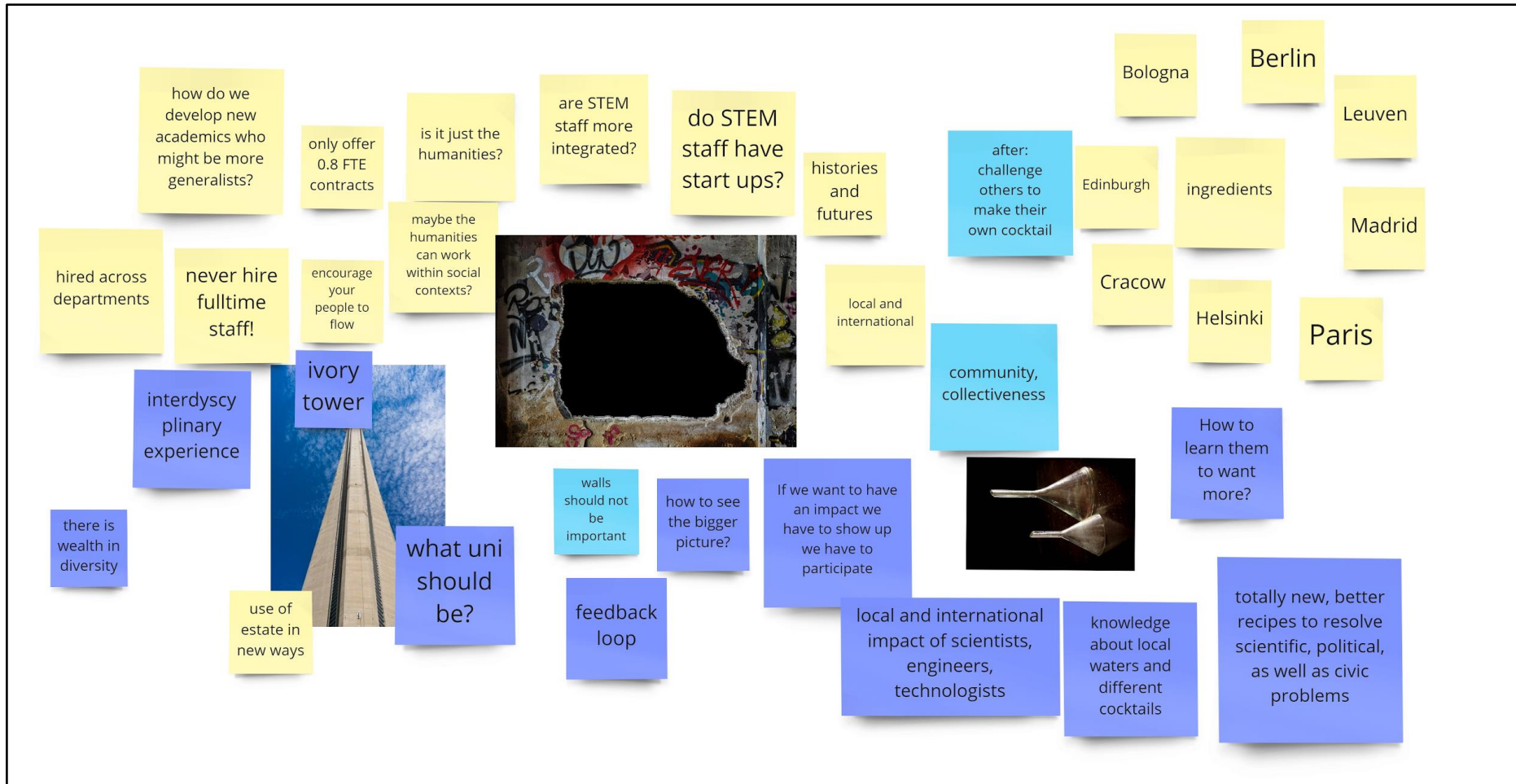
Appendix 1.



Appendix 2.



Appendix 3.



Appendix 4.

