

CALL FOR EXPERTS

Development of an Asynchronous Online Course on Leadership Competencies

UNITA Alliance

Background

The UNITA – Universitas Montium Alliance invites academic and administrative staff from its member universities to apply to participate in developing an asynchronous online leadership competencies course.

The course will be based on the UNITA Leadership Competency Model for Academic and Administrative Staff (UNITA 2.0) and aims to support the professional development of current and future academic and administrative leaders across the alliance.

Objective of the call

The objective of this Call for Experts is to select qualified experts who will contribute to:

- the design and development of asynchronous online learning content;
- the creation of formative (ongoing) and summative (final) assessment questionnaires;
- the alignment of learning outcomes and assessments with the UNITA Leadership Competency Model (see below).

Course scope and competency areas

The course content will address the following leadership competency areas defined in the UNITA model:

- Strategic leadership
- People and relationship management
- Academic excellence and impact
- Operational and resource management
- Ethical leadership and institutional responsibility
- Digital and innovation skills
- Agile leadership

Role and responsibilities of selected experts

Selected experts will be expected to:

- develop content for one or more course modules (texts, lesson structures, learning scenarios, case studies);
- define learning outcomes and competency-based objectives;
- design formative and summative assessment tools;
- collaborate with the UNITA team to ensure pedagogical coherence and quality assurance in the implementation of the course on the platform.

This work will be rewarded.

Eligibility criteria

Applicants must:

- be affiliated with one of the UNITA member universities;
- demonstrate relevant expertise in one or more of the leadership competency areas;
- have experience in higher education, leadership, management, or professional development.

Experience in online course development, digital learning, or competency-based assessment will be considered an asset.

Application procedure

Interested candidates are invited to complete the **Application Form**, providing information on:

- professional background and institutional affiliation;
- areas of expertise aligned with the UNITA Leadership Competency Model;
- experience in course and assessment development;
- proposed contribution and motivation.

Deadline for applications

📅 12 February 2026

The selection process will be before 19 February 2026

The deadline to finish each of the 7 courses is 20 April 2026

Selection process

Applications will be evaluated by a selection committee appointed by the UNITA Alliance, based on:

- experience in leadership and higher education;
- experience in online course development and assessment;
- quality of the proposed contribution and motivation.

The final selection will ensure institutional and geographical balance across the alliance.

Further Information

For further details on the application process and selection criteria, please refer to **the Application Form** and the accompanying evaluation rubric.

3. LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY MODEL FOR ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN UNITA 2.0

This model outlines the key competencies essential for academic leaders, including department heads, deans, research leaders, and aspirants, as well as administrative staff in higher education institutions. The seven dimensions of this model are:



1. Strategic leadership

Definition: *Strategic leadership among academic and administrative staff in universities refers to the ability to influence and guide an institution's direction, decisions, and policies while aligning resources and efforts with its long-term goals.*

This competence encompasses vision-setting, stakeholder engagement, and the ability to navigate the complexities of higher education environments, fostering innovation, collaboration, and institutional effectiveness.

Sub-competences:

Vision and strategic thinking – Ability to set a clear and inspiring vision aligned with institutional goals and long-term academic strategies.

Change management – Leading institutional transformation and adapting to evolving educational landscapes; *Decision-making and problem-solving* – Using data-driven insights, critical thinking, and stakeholder input to make informed decisions.

Innovation and future-oriented mindset – Encouraging innovative research, teaching, and institutional development.

Recognizing strengths – Recognizing existing strengths and the importance of maintaining these.

Secure funding and green partnerships – Identify funding sources for sustainability projects and collaborate with institutions, NGOs, and companies to develop innovative solutions.

2. People and relationship management

Definition: *Leadership competence in people and relationship management refers to the ability to effectively engage, motivate, and develop individuals and teams within an academic and administrative context.*

This competence encompasses the skills necessary to foster positive working relationships, facilitate collaboration, and create an inclusive and supportive environment that enhances organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction in a university setting.

Sub-competences:

Communication and influence – Effectively conveying ideas, listening, building consensus, and engaging diverse academic and administrative audiences.

Collaboration and teamwork – Fostering interdisciplinary and internal cooperation, networking, and external partnerships (political authorities, private partners, etc.).

Conflict resolution and mediation – Addressing and resolving disputes constructively while maintaining academic integrity.

Mentorship and talent development – Supporting faculty and staff development through coaching and professional growth opportunities.

Personal efficiency – Leaders should demonstrate self-management, adaptability, and resilience to respond to the dynamic challenges of higher education.

Empathy and compassion: The ability to relate to others, oneself, and nature with kindness, empathy, and compassion, and to address related suffering.

3. Academic excellence and impact

Definition: *Leadership competence in people and relationship management refers to the capacity to advance high-quality education, rigorous scholarship, and socially relevant outcomes through integrated leadership in teaching, research, and community engagement.*

This competence reflects a sustained commitment to creating learning and research environments that generate high-quality knowledge while producing meaningful impact for students, institutions, and society.

Sub-competences:

Educational leadership – Advocating for high-quality teaching, learning methodologies, and curriculum development.

Research and scholarly contributions – Promoting academic rigor, research integrity, and knowledge dissemination.

Student-centric approach – Ensuring a learning environment that prioritizes student success and well-being.

Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion – Creating inclusive academic spaces and fostering diverse perspectives.

Impactful community engagement – Building meaningful partnerships with community organizations, industries, and relevant stakeholders to enhance societal impact.

Assessment and continuous improvement – Assessing academic programs and initiatives systematically, using data to inform decision-making and drive improvements.

4. Operational and resource management

Definition: *Operational and resource management competence in leadership pertains to the ability of academic and administrative staff in universities to effectively plan, organize, and manage the resources and processes necessary to achieve institutional goals.*

This competence encompasses skills related to optimizing operational efficiency, managing budgets, and ensuring the responsible allocation of resources to support education, research, and administrative functions.

Sub-competences:

Organizational competencies - Skills in strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and financial management are vital for navigating the complexities of academic institutions

Budgeting and financial acumen – Efficiently managing financial resources while aligning with institutional priorities.*

Policy development and governance – Understanding and applying academic policies, regulations, and accreditation requirements.

Crisis management and resilience – Responding to institutional and academic challenges with agility and composure.

Time and project management – Balancing multiple responsibilities while ensuring institutional and academic goals are met.

5. Ethical leadership and institutional responsibility

Definition: *The competence of ethical leadership and institutional responsibility refers to the ability of academic and administrative staff within universities to act with integrity, uphold ethical standards, and promote a culture of accountability and responsibility.*

This competence encompasses the skills necessary to make principled decisions that reflect the institution's values, ensuring fairness, transparency, and adherence to ethical practices in academic and administrative processes.

Sub-competences:

Integrity and professional ethics – Upholding academic and research ethics while fostering a culture of trust.

Social responsibility and sustainability – Leading initiatives that contribute to academia's broader social and environmental mission.

Transparency and accountability – Ensuring open decision-making processes and responsible governance.

Advocacy and institutional representation – Acting as a strong ambassador for the university and its academic community.

Inspire a responsible academic culture – Engage students, faculty, and administrative staff in adopting sustainable behaviors and initiatives, and also monitor impact.

6. Digital and innovation skills

Definition: *The competence in digital and innovation skills in leadership refers to the ability of academic and administrative staff within universities to leverage digital technologies and foster a culture of innovation.*

This competence encompasses the skills necessary to navigate the digital landscape, implement technological solutions, and promote innovative practices that enhance teaching, learning, research, and administrative processes.

Sub-competences:

Technology integration in teaching and research – Leveraging digital tools to enhance learning, research collaboration, and academic operations.

Data-driven decision-making – Using institutional data and analytics for continuous improvement.

Cybersecurity and information management – Understanding digital ethics, data security, and responsible research data usage.

Adaptability to emerging trends – Staying updated with advancements in education technology and research methodologies.

7. Agile leadership

Definition: *Agile leadership refers to the ability of academic and administrative staff within universities to lead with flexibility, adaptability, and a focus on collaboration in a rapidly changing environment.*

This competence encompasses skills and mindsets that facilitate responsiveness to challenges and opportunities, promote collaboration across diverse teams, and foster innovation in educational practices and administrative processes.

Sub-competences:

Adaptability and flexibility – The ability to quickly adjust leadership styles and strategies in response to changing circumstances, needs, or challenges.

Collaborative mindset - The capacity to foster teamwork and encourage collaboration across departments, disciplines, and stakeholder groups.

Empowerment of teams – The ability to delegate authority and encourage autonomy among team members, enabling them to take ownership of their work.

Innovation and experimentation - The ability to cultivate an environment that encourages creative thinking, experimentation, and the pursuit of innovative solutions.

User-centric focus - The ability to prioritize the needs and experiences of students, faculty, and staff in decision-making processes.

Resilience and support - The capability to maintain composure and provide support during times of uncertainty or stress, fostering resilience within teams.