



# RE-ACT

## Framework requirements and platform mock-up

WP1 | D1.3.2



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# RE-ACT

**Self-reflection Tools for Smart Universities Acting Regionally**

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## Contents

Introduction .....	4
Project and WP 1 overview .....	4
Aim and structure of the document .....	4
Definition of the type of platform .....	5
Definition of technical requirements .....	6
Definition of contents .....	7
Home .....	7
Login/Registration .....	8
Privacy policy .....	8
Download area .....	8
A proposal for the new platform.....	9

# Introduction

## Project and WP 1 overview

RE-ACT – Self-reflection tools for smart universities acting regionally, aims at unleashing the potential of HEINNOVATE for RIS3, supporting HEIs to rethink and reposition their strategies, structures and actions through a holistic approach to innovation and entrepreneurship, regionally embedded and supported by collaborative links among key actors of the triple helix

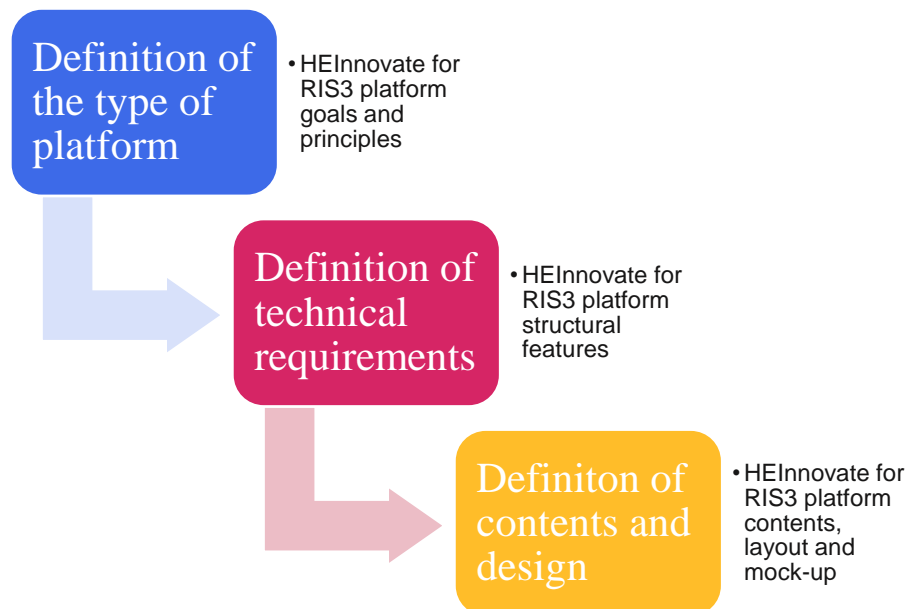
Within the first work package (WP), the project will provide the foundations for the capitalisation and cross-fertilisation of HEINNOVATE and RIS3. Its main objective is translating the potential of HEINNOVATE for RIS3 into an upgraded online self-assessment tool.

After an extensive research analysis who collected the views of experts and regional key actors from the different nodes of the triple helix to the know-how and expertise of the partners, new dimensions, statements and resources have been built in order to develop HEInnovate for RIS3. HEInnovate for RIS3 is a free self-assessment tool intended for all types of higher education institutions (Universities, University Colleges, Polytechnics, etc.) interested in assessing their level of engagement in research and innovation strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3) of regions they operate.

## Aim and structure of the document

Starting from the backbone for the future online tool delivered by the “Conceptual Outline for HEInnovate for RIS3” (D1.2.1), concluded in May 2021 and aimed at presenting the last step of the process, the objective of this document is to provide the framework requirements of the new platform, with related descriptions and supporting materials, in order to find an agreement among all partners.

As shown in figure 1, the document is divided into three main sections, corresponding to the three main steps of a web design process. For each step, general requirements and specific needs are highlighted; then proposals for the new platform to be developed are provided.



**FIGURE 1 - THE WEB DESIGN PROCESS AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT**

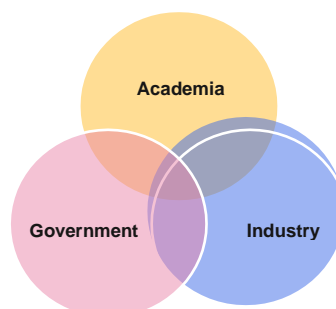
## Definition of the type of platform

In order to find an agreement about the most suitable type of platform to implement, target groups objectives and main principles of the HEInnovate for RIS3 platform need to be identified.

The **target groups** of the new tool, as defined in RE-ACT's proposal, are key players of the triple helix model (fig. 2), namely organization and individuals connected to:

- **Academia:** Universities and other Higher Education Institutions (HEI); Research Centers and other research-oriented organisations; academic and research staff; regional, national or international organisations grouping HEI's or aimed at networking and discussing common issues.
- **Government:** Public authorities and decision-makers, especially those connected to RIS3; policy makers at all levels; Municipalities; Governments; Local, regional, national and European Authorities; NGO's or other organisations supporting policy-making.
- **Industry:** Private Companies (Industry, Business...) including SMEs; Business Umbrella Organisations.

More specifically, first the tool will be tested internally by academic partners and then it will be made available for other HEIs and stakeholders.



**FIGURE 2 - TRIPLE HELIX MODEL**

As for the main **goals**, the HEInnovate for RIS3 platform will provide a tool, conceived as an extension of HEInnovate, focused on the role of HEIs in regional development through the smart specialization approach, particularly RIS3 design and implementation.

To this aim, the new platform will:

- a) provide general information about HEInnovate for RIS3;
- b) give the opportunity to perform a self-assessment (individual or group) and receive the score (a positioning that is based on scores);
- c) provide resources and training materials specifically addressed to HEIs, public authorities and regional actors.

Considering these specific needs, the HEInnovate for RIS3 platform should be based on 3 main **principles**:

- open-source: HEInnovate for RIS3 should be an open-source platform, to facilitate transparency, reliability and the future eventual migration/merging of the new tool with the original HEINNOVATE self-assessment tool available online;
- interaction: HEInnovate for RIS3 should facilitate interaction and the sharing of information to and from end-users;
- user-friendly: HEInnovate for RIS3 should have a user-friendly interface and structure.

## Definition of technical requirements

Once the objectives and typology of platform to be implemented have been defined, it is necessary to assess and find an agreement about technical requirements and special requests to be met to carry out specific functions of the new platform.

This step is mainly related to the *provision of an adequate hosting environment*, including hardware, software, Internet connectivity and domain names, back-ups, security, integrity, etc.

Hosting could be paid or free. Paid hosting offers professional service for a fee and many other advantages, such as the presence of a customised top-level domain. On the other hand, a free hosting only offers a subdomain, but allows to have a website for free and the opportunity to learn how to create a website from the ground up. Indeed, web services that offer free hosting usually also provide tools to help set up the website.

Choosing the hosting, 5 main aspects need to be considered:

- a) the presence of a Content Management System (CMS): CMS is a platform that allows simplified management of the contents of a website, without having to resort to code changes, which are much more complex and riskier. Open-source CMS are publicly available platforms, widely used, generally inexpensive and flexible management systems, which meet the most generic needs and are suitable for a wide range of customers;
- b) the opportunity to implement the CMS with an additional specific plug in for the self-assessment tool;
- c) the presence of SSD storage space: since a website needs to be fast, it is better to look for a service that offers hosting suited to the new web standards;
- d) the presence of a “download area” in which to make available resources and training materials;
- e) the presence of web facilities aimed at accommodating a variety of devices and systems, such as PC, tablets, smartphones, etc.

## Definition of contents

After defining technical requirements, it is important to find an agreement about contents and resources to be provided within the platform. Considering the specific goals of this new tool, the new platform should provide 5 main level of information/contents (fig. 3).

### Home

This section should provide information about HEINNOVATE for RIS3 (background, support mechanism).

HEInnovate for RIS3 is a free, flexible self-assessment tool intended for all types of higher education institutions (Universities, University Colleges, Polytechnics, etc.) interested in assessing their level of engagement in research and innovation strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3) of the regions where they are located, as well as other stakeholders interested in the topic.

HEInnovate for RIS3 has been developed by the consortium of the EU funded project *RE-ACT-Self-reflection Tools for Smart Universities Acting Regionally*, starting from the original HEINNOVATE tool, promoted by the DG Education and Culture of the European Commission, and the OECD LEED Forum.

### Link for self-assessment exercise

It consists in 8 dimension and includes 30 statements aimed at leading HEIs to revise their strategies, structures and practices and translating their vision of becoming entrepreneurial smart universities regionally embedded into concrete action plans. More specifically, this tool has 4 main aims. Some of these aims are conceived to have more immediate effects (short/medium term aims); others are more future-oriented (long-term aims):

1. assessing HEIs responsiveness to the challenge of being engaged in the regional innovation ecosystem and active contributing to policy development (short/medium term aim).
2. debating and agreeing upon a joint positioning for HEIs as regional assets (short/medium term aim).
3. engaging the key actors of the quadruple helix and underpin a collaborative work among them for RIS3 revision, implementation and monitoring (long-term aim).
4. offering peer support to quadruple helix networks from other regions, strengthening HEIS in their pivotal roles in igniting, cherishing, and sustaining innovation (long-term aim).

This section should also provide resources, namely guides and concept notes for the dimensions and statements. Hence, a short description of each dimension of HEInnovate for RIS3 and each statement is presented, similarly to the original HEInnovate.

Finally, a bottom to start the self-assessment process will be provided, also using the HEInnovate tool as a model. Practically, each user performing self-assessment will go through each of the 8 dimensions and respective statements, having the possibility to position itself on a scale of 1 to 5 based on the description of each statement.

### Login/Registration

The tool will offer the opportunity to enter as a guest, in order to take informed decision about using it or not. Nevertheless, a login/registration section will be provided and it is mandatory to perform the self-assessment.

This section is important, in order to create a database of users and institutions who will use the tool and should contain name, email, organisation (according to the quadruple helix division) and country.

As the original HEInnovate tool, in this section each user will have the opportunity to create a personal account and association it with its affiliation institution. Once the user will be registered and logged in, he/she will have the opportunity to start the self-assessment, receive the results by email in pdf format and store and manage the results within the platform.

- Within the platform a user dashboard will be available. Users could view the results in three modes: *overview*: for each self-assessment, a graph with all results divided per dimensions will be shown.
- *detailed results*: for each self-assessment, the list of all responses will be shown
- *comparison*: for each dimension results will be shown in comparison (1) against all self-assessments and (2) against all self-assessments made by users affiliated to the same institution.

### Privacy policy

One other thing to take into consideration is the security of the data inserted in the databases of the site, therefore a data protection treatment will be included at the platform:

“By understanding that the use of your personal data requires your confidence, we follow the current regulations and the appropriate procedures in the treatment and data protection. We will only use your personal data for the purposes we identify below, following the General Regulation on Data Protection (GDPR) and ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of your personal data. The Privacy Policy described below, establishes how the consortium of the RE-ACT project treats the personal data of its partners, external participants and staff participating in the training provided in the framework of the project, external participants in the national and international challenge, external participants in the public dissemination events of the project and visitors to our website.”

### Download area

This section will provide resources and training materials about HEInnovate for RIS3 organized in 2 sub-parts:

- training materials and support materials addressed to HEIs, public authorities and regional actors (results of WP2, WP3 and WP4)
- Resources related to other similar projects and activities (links and information towards complementary initiatives and knowledge repositories, such as JRCs HESS initiative, EECOLE of OECD, etc.)



## A proposal for the new platform

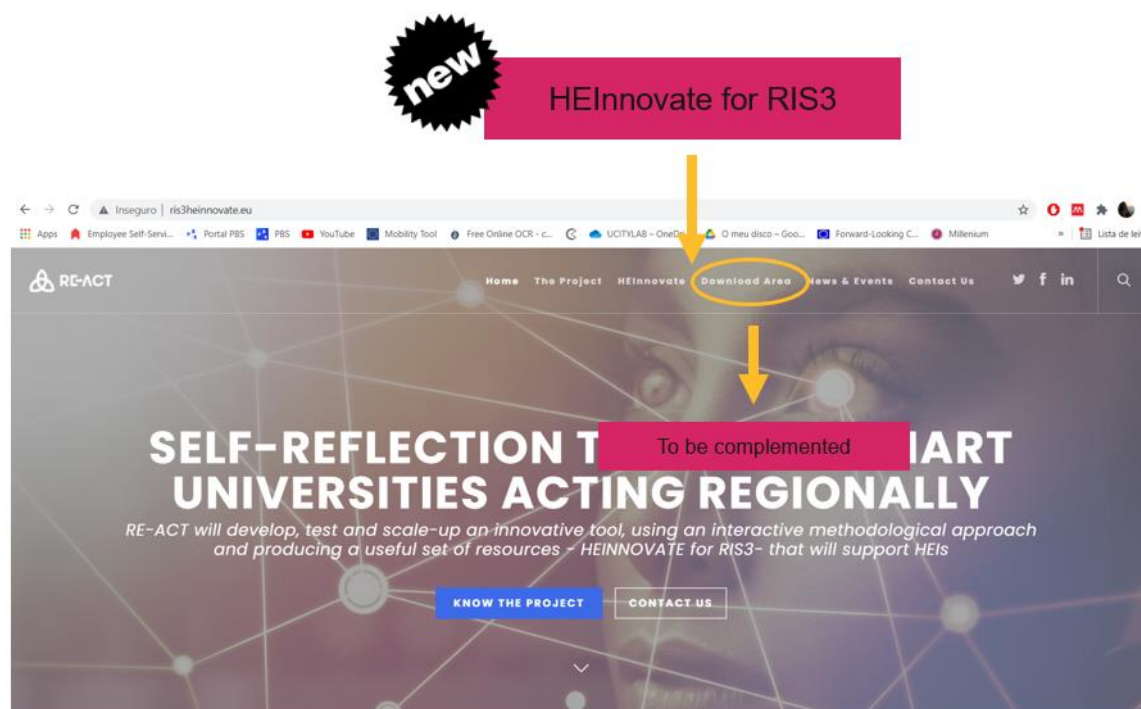
Considering all aspects and needs highlighted in the previous paragraphs, the HEInnovate for RIS3 platform should be conceived as a separate tool to be “channelled” to the REACT project website (<http://ris3heinnovate.eu/>).

The main reason of this separation relates to the opportunity to manage in a more effective way the registration/login functions and, more generally, all the self-assessment tool.

At the same time, the tool should be connected to REACT project website for 3 main reasons:

- Collect all information resources and tools in a unique virtual place;
- Simplify users ‘experience: users will have easy access to all information related to REACT project, HEInnovate and HEInnovate for RIS3;
- Facilitate an eventual future migration/merging of the new tool with the original HEInnovate self-assessment tool.

This solution is also easily feasible from a practical point of view. Indeed, the REACT project website already provides all general information about HEInnovate and the link to the original self-assessment tool. Furthermore, the website already has a “download area”, which should only be complemented with specific resources and material related to the HEInnovate for RIS3.



**FIGURE 3 - RE-ACT PROJECT WEBSITE. IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSAL**

## Catarina Reis

### Get started

Here you can read about the dimensions of HEInnovate and download the Concept note, which provides a background on HEInnovate and the concept of entrepreneurial universities.

To start a self-assessment, select one of the dimensions from the diagram. By clicking on the diagram you will be taken to the selected dimension of HEInnovate. Under each of the eight dimensions, statements have been designed so that you can rate them on a scale of 1 to 5. On the scale 1 represents the lowest and 5 the highest score. A 'not applicable' (n/a) option is also available. Please use the slider under the statements to score.

Expand the dimensions below to read more

- Leadership and Governance
- Organisational Capacity: Funding, People and Incentives
- Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning
- Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs
- Digital Transformation and Capability
- Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration
- The Internationalised Institution
- Measuring Impact

Select one of the dimensions below to start a self-assessment

 Leadership and Governance	 Organisational Capacity: Funding, People and Incentives	 Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning	 Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs
 Digital Transformation and Capability	 Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration	 The Internationalised Institution	 Measuring Impact



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**FIGURE 4 – HEINNOVATE FOR RIS3. APPEARANCE PROPOSAL**