



VERTEBRALCUE

ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT

The following VertebrALCUE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT is made and undersigned

Between

1. the **Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna**, representing the VertebrALCUE Project Consortium (Contract n° DCI-ALA/19.09.01/08 /19189/161-449/ALFA III-107), which includes 32 members¹,

and

2. **Associated Partner Institution** (abbreviation or acronym, if any), (postal and physical address), represented by (name and position of the legal person), or authorized representative,

concerning their co-operation and commitment in the building of the ALCUE Unit as set in the VertebrALCUE Project co-funded by the European Commission under the EC Grant Contract n° DCI-ALA/19.09.01/08/19189/161-449/ALFA III-107 an excerpt of which is enclosed to this Agreement as Annex A,

they have agreed to co-operate and contribute according to the principles below :

Article 1 - Scope of the Agreement

Through this Agreement, the associated partner named above declares:

¹ FLACSO Argentina (FLA-A- P1), Universidad Nacional de Quilmes (UNQ - P2), Universidad Nacional Trés de Febrero (UNTREF - P3), Universidad Loyola (LOYOLA - P4), Centro Boliviano de Estudios Multidisciplinarios (CEBEM - P5), Instituto Internacional de Planejamento Educacional (IIPE - P6), Fundacao de Apoio a Universidade de Sao Paulo (FUSP - P7), Centro Edelstein (CE - P8), Corporación Universidad Central de Chile (UCCH - P9), Universidad Austral de Chile (UACH - P10), Asociación Colombiana de Universidades (ASCUN - P11), Universidad Antonio Nariño (UAN - P12), Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA - P13), FLACSO Ecuador (FLA-E - P14), Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL - P15), Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana Azcapotzalco (UAM - P16), Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANUIES - P17), FLACSO México (FLA-M - P18), Universidad Centroamericana (UCA - P19), Centro de Estudios de Derecho, Economía y Política (CEDEP - P20), Universidad Autónoma de Asunción (UAA - P21), Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP - P22), Instituto de Estudios Peruanos (IEP - P23), Universidad de la República (UR - 24), Universidad Simón Bolívar (USB - P25), Karl-Franzens University of Graz (GRAZ - P26), SCIENTER (SCIE - P27), Universidade de Coimbra (UC - P28), Universidad de Granada (UGR - P29), Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (UPV - P30), Fundació Universitat-Empresa de les Illes Balears (FUEIB - P31), Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna (UNIBO - P32).

- that it shares the founding values and main goals of the VertebrALCUE Project;
- that it will contribute to achieving one of the Project' specific objectives, that is setting up an ALCUE Unit;
- that it will do so by building an ALCUE Unit within its institution or jointly with other organisations;
- that it takes the full financial and administrative responsibility for such an activity, including the participation to any other Project activities for at least two years;
- that it commits to pursue the 9 main functions of the ALCUE Unit as established by the Project partners and which are recalled and summarised as:
 - Looking inside (promoting coordination within the institution)
 - Looking outside (identifying relevant stakeholders around the partner university)
 - Involving Stakeholders
 - Cooperating at National level
 - Working for sustainability
 - Supporting all actors involved
 - Promoting the ALCUE cooperation philosophy
 - Being active in the network
 - Result/impact evaluation

For a better understanding of each meta function, see attached "ALCUE Unit Tentative list of expected activities for each metafunction" as Annex C.

- that this activity also implies participating actively and constructively in the wider VertebrALCUE network of cooperation in the higher education;
- that it has carefully read and agrees on the Annex A to this Agreement (Excerpt from Annex I "Description of the Action" to the EC Grant Contract n° DCI-ALA/19.09.01/08/19189/161-449/ALFA III-107) related to the whole VertebrALCUE Project.

Article 2 – Duration of execution

This Agreement shall take effect from the date of the signature below and will be renewable indefinitely every two years.

Article 3 – VertebrALCUE Consortium's commitment

The Consortium mentioned and described above, agrees to support the new associated partner in its effort of building up the ALCUE Unit by providing information, tools developed within the VertebrALCUE Project, advice and any other appropriate means, and also to cooperate with it within the VertebrALCUE network or in any other emerging opportunities in the field of higher education, both in Latin America and in Europe.

Article 4 – Associated Partner' commitment

The Associated Partner commits to:

- define an action plan for the AU and submit it to the PCG for approval;
- regularly report to the PCG on the state of advancement of the AU;
- participate in yearly general meetings of all Alcue Units which will be decided by the Consortium
- give due visibility to the ALFA III Programme and to the VertebrALCUE Project according to the rules and indications set by the Consortium in the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Project.

Article 5 – Amendments or Additions to the Agreement

Any modifications to this agreement may only be made by means of an amendment to the agreement signed by its signatories.

The following are annexed to and form an integral part of this Agreement:

Annex A: Excerpt from Annex I “Description of the Action” to the EC Grant Contract n° DCI-ALA/19.09.01/08/19189/161-449/ALFA III-107 between UNIBO and the European Commission

Annex B: ALCUE Unit Tentative list of expected activities for each metafunction.

Drawn up in Bologna, on 2010

**For and on behalf of
UNIBO**

ANNEX A to the VertebralCUE Association Agreement:

**Excerpt from Annex I “Description of the Action” to the EC GRANT
CONTRACT N°DCI-ALA/19.09.01/08/19189/161-449/ALFA III-107**

EXCERPT FROM ANNEX I “DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION” TO THE EC GRANT CONTRACT N° DCI-ALA/19.09.01/08/19189/ 161- 449/ALFA III-107

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1.7 Description of the Action and its effectiveness

The proposed action, gathering a good number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Latin America and Europe, intends to design principles, model structure, action plan, evaluation criteria and verify feasibility conditions for a “vertebrating model” for the Common Area of Higher Education between Latin America and the European Union, VERTEBRALCUE, a new collaboration infrastructure at institutional, national and regional level involving the academic community at all levels and stakeholders of higher education.

The VERTEBRALCUE Project aims to contribute to the development process of the regional integration among Latin American Higher Education Systems (HESs) and the implementing process of the Common Area of Higher Education between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union (ALCUE in Spanish) by exploring and strengthening different levels of articulation of Latin America-Latin America and EU-Latin America academic cooperation through the design and implementation of a cooperation infrastructure at institutional, national and regional level.

VERTEBRALCUE, conceived as the building process of Higher Education cooperation’s infrastructure, will contribute to increase awareness, participation, openness and progress towards the process of regional integration among Latin American Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the ALCUE Common Area of Higher Education of the academic community at all levels and of stakeholders of Higher Education by articulating and valorising results and initiatives of the many centres, inside and around the HEI, that are already active, and by encouraging newcomers to start new cooperation projects/programmes while building on what is already existing.

Furthermore, through the VERTEBRALCUE infrastructure, the project will contribute to promote the establishment of structural and lasting links and networks among Higher Education Institutions in LA (LA HEIs) and between LA HEIs and EU HEIs, with specific pilot actions and activities that will be carried in the VERTEBRALCUE Units that will also embody the action’s results. The specific activities implemented in the VERTEBRALCUE cooperation infrastructure will be designed according to the priorities of the ALFA III Programme. Specific actions will be addressed to support the reform and modernization of higher education institutions and systems in the beneficiary countries, as well as their quality, accessibility and relevance, taking particular account of the region’s poorest countries promoting the participation of entities from these countries. The VERTEBRALCUE cooperation infrastructure will embody actions which will contribute to support the integration between universities, enterprises, local government and society, contributing therefore to local development and social cohesion.

The experience of Bologna University in Buenos Aires (the entity that coordinates this proposal), is a basis for analysis and development of initiatives to be implemented in the VERTEBRALCUE infrastructure in this last direction, while the whole partnership’s profile provides ground for building on a massive body of expertise and knowledge on Regional (within Latin America) and International (between LA and EU) Cooperation.

The specific objectives of the project are:

To identify strengths and weaknesses of existing cooperation models and infrastructures (networks, programmes, agencies, specialised units in HEI and governments, etc.) of academic cooperation among LA HEI and between LA and EU HEI

To identify priority actions to further develop the existing infrastructure for cooperation through a diagnostic, strategic and prospective exercise

To implement design principles, model structure and functions, feasibility and action plan, minimum requirements and evaluation criteria for ALCUE Units in HEI in LA

To propose design principles, model structure and functions, feasibility and action plan, minimum requirements and evaluation criteria for ALCUE National coordination Units

To consolidate the Regional dimension of integration of HE systems in LA

To promote thematic dialogue at national, regional and international level and the establishment of lasting Thematic Networks proposing design and implementing principles, feasibility and action plan, minimum requirements and evaluation criteria for sustainable ALCUE Thematic Networks addressing the priorities of the ALFA III Programme mentioned above and on priority actions identified by the project

To promote, stimulate and explore bi-lateral and multi-lateral structured cooperation among leading HEI and other relevant actors of the two Regions

To evaluate modelling and prototyping activities proposed by the project

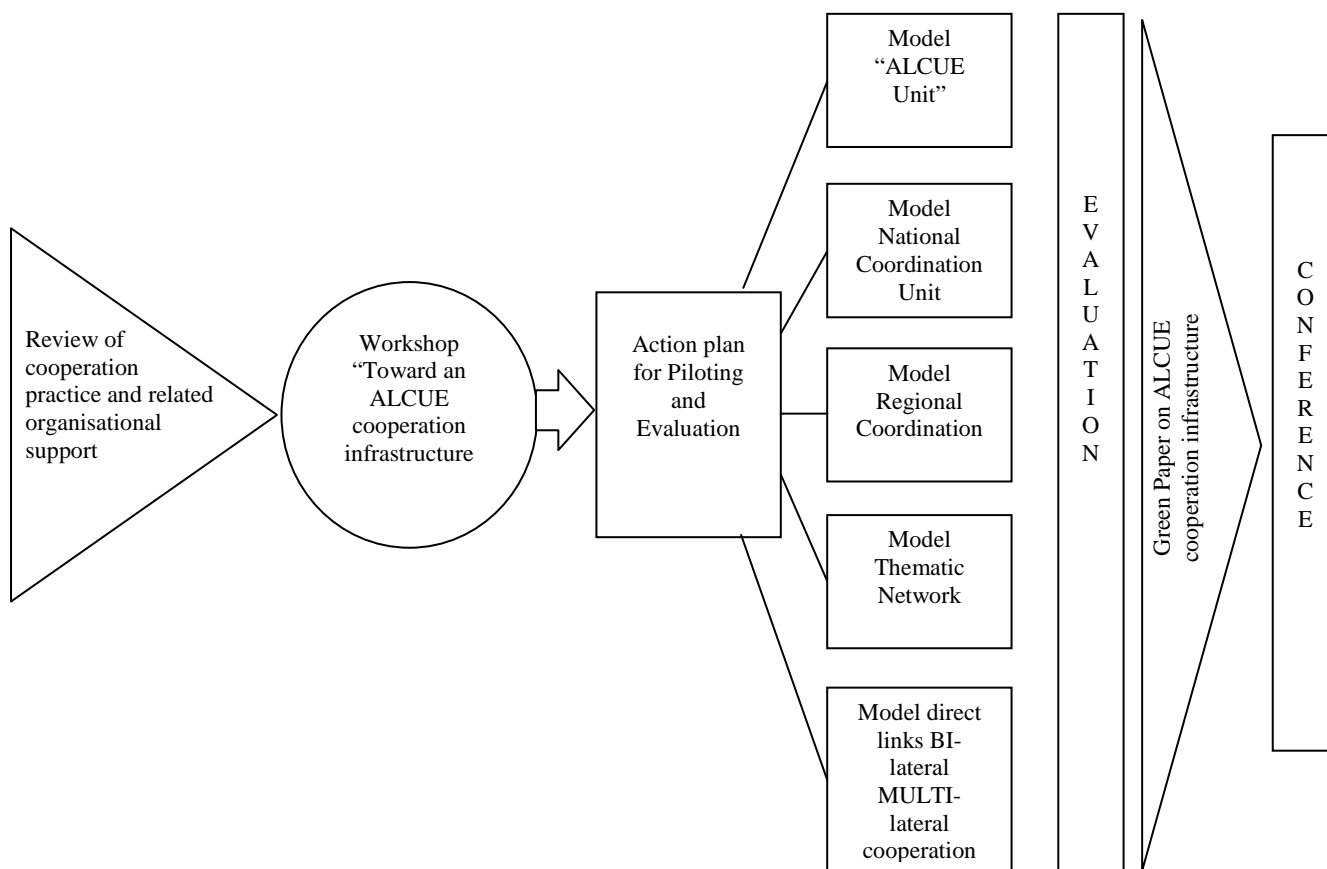
To propose and promote a Middle Term Action Plan of the ALCUE Cooperation Infrastructure

In the following tables the main activities and expected outputs and results are reported, related to the specific objectives of the proposed action:

Objectives	Activities	Outputs and Expected Results
1. To identify strengths and weaknesses of existing cooperation models and infrastructures (networks, programmes, agencies, specialised units in HEI and governments, etc.) of academic cooperation among LA HEI and between LA and EU HEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk research on existing cooperation models and infrastructures on Academic Cooperation • Open consultation on line on strength and weaknesses of existing models and infrastructures • Analysis and classification of existing models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “State of the Art” Report on Academic Cooperation models and infrastructures
2. To identify priority actions to further develop the existing infrastructure for cooperation through a diagnostic, strategic and prospective exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of a major international workshop to present results of research and analysis • Setting priorities for action through a broad consultation of the academic community and its stakeholders in their Region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Workshop “Towards an ALCUE HE Cooperation infrastructure” • Methodological Framework and Draft Action Plan for Modelling VERTEBRALCUE
3. To implement design principles, model structure and functions, feasibility and action plan, minimum requirements and evaluation criteria for ALCUE Units in HEI in LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop of 25 Prototypes of ALCUE Units in Latin America • Analysis of experiences and development of a mutual learning community of ALCUE Units coordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blueprint for ALCUE units within HEI • 25 pilot ALCUE units in place in LA HEI
4. To propose design principles, model structure and functions, feasibility and action plan, minimum requirements and evaluation criteria for an ALCUE National coordination Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of 5 Feasibility Studies of National Coordination Units in LA • Analysis of experiences and development of a cooperation model at national level and among National Coordinate Units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report and recommendations on ALCUE National Coordination processes and structures. • 5 Feasibility Studies of ALCUE National Coordination Units • Agreements among HEIs at national level
5. To consolidate the Regional dimension of integration of HE systems in LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on the feasibility of a multi-polar coordination structure at regional level for Latin American integration and participation in the implementation of the ALCUE Common Area of Higher Education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study and Action Plan on Regional Integration and Participation in the implementation of the ALCUE Common Area of Higher Education • Agreements of HEIs at Regional level

<p>6. To promote thematic dialogue at national, regional and international level and the establishment of lasting Thematic Networks proposing design and implementing principles, feasibility and action plan, minimum requirements and evaluation criteria for sustainable ALCUE Thematic Networks addressing the priorities of the ALFA III Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis, diagnosis and development of 4 (existing) ALCUE thematic networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Plans for sustainable development of ALCUE Thematic Networks • Report and recommendations for ALCUE Thematic Network Developers • Agreements of HEIs on the constitution of Thematic Networks at National and Regional level
<p>7. To promote, stimulate and explore bi-lateral and multi-lateral structured co-operation among leading HEI of the two Regions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of and support to 5 exemplary experience of structural cooperation among leading universities of the two Regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on 5 concrete examples of structural cooperation in place (e.g. stable teaching and research units of an LA university in Europe and vice-versa, quadrilateral programmes for international cooperation) • Bi-Regional and Multilateral Agreements
<p>8. To evaluate and integrate ALCUE cooperation infrastructure modeling and prototyping activities proposed by the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of 13 Local Evaluation Seminars • Organisation of 4 integration seminars • Organisation of 4 evaluation seminars • Monitoring and evaluation activities during the life-span of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 Local Evaluation Seminars • 4 VERTEBRALCUE Integration Seminars • 4 VERTEBRALCUE Evaluation seminars • 2 Annual Evaluation Report • Final Evaluation report
<p>9. To propose a middle-term Action Plan for the implementation of the ALCUE cooperation infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of the Action Plan (Green Paper) • Extensive consultation on-line on proposed recommendations • Organisation of final dissemination conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VERTEBRALCUE Website • Multistakeholders' events • Green Paper on ALCUE Cooperation Infrastructure • Final conference and Publication

The graphic representation below intends to explain the general organization and the logical sequence of the action, giving evidence of the principle phases and the main final results.



Following the graphical representation above, the project will be articulated in the following three main phases:

PHASE 1: PRIORITY SETTINGS, ACTION PLAN, METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

It will be the preparatory phase for the design, modeling and prototyping activities of the VERTEBRALCUE infrastructure. A bottom-up and top-down approach will be organized, involving from the first moment the local units and the stakeholders at different levels. The first phase will involve all partners in a self-assessment activity on cooperation practice with other HEI, followed by an “external” review on strengths and weaknesses of existing cooperation programs, infrastructures, networks, models,.. Each partner will act, in this first phase, as first embrional ALCUE Unit, verifying its organization, strengths and weaknesses on academic cooperation and contributing to the general discussion and to the local stakeholders involvement. A broad consultation of the academic community and its stakeholders in their Region will be put in place to assure participation, awareness and the necessary support for the sustainability of the VERTEBRALCUE priority settings and action plan. Basing on the results of the review and on a deep discussion involving the stakeholders, a major international workshop will be organised to present results of review and analysis, to discuss and set priorities and give inputs for the draft Action plan and for the Common methodological framework, that will be put in place to support the modeling and prototyping activities.

PHASE 2: VERTEBRALCUE MODELING AND PROTOTYPING

Building on the results of the above mentioned activities, 5 main models will be designed:

- One for each of the three main “vertical levels” that constitute the VERTEBRALCUE infrastructure, ALCUE Units, ALCUE National Coordination Units, ALCUE Regional Multipolar Coordination Units

- One for ALCUE Thematic Networks and one for the ALCUE Bi-Lateral and Multilateral Cooperation, articulating linking different vertebra at different level in the VERTEBRALCUE structure.

Each model, building the Methodological Framework identified in Phase 1, will identify specific design principles, structure and functions, feasibility and action plan, minimum requirements and evaluation criteria for the VERTEBRALCUE specific “component”, keeping in mind the general Methodological frameworks. Integration activities will guarantee feed back of one model to the others and an overall integrated design. The feasibility and the implementation of the prototype of each of the models will depend also from external constraints, mainly on the level of commitment and willingness of national government, HEI and the other stakeholders, a critical issue that will be addressed throughout the whole project with target activities to which Workpackage will be dedicated (WorkPackage 10).

PHASE 3: VERTEBRALCUE EVALUATION

All of the 5 main models (for the ALCUE Units, for the ALCUE National Coordination Units, for the ALCUE Regional Multipolar Coordination Units, for Thematic Networks, for Bilateral-Multilateral Cooperation) will be integrated and evaluated. Integration Focus Groups and Evaluation seminars will be organised to integrate the VERTEBRALCUE Models and to elaborate evaluation results, that will feed back to the 5 models reports/studies.

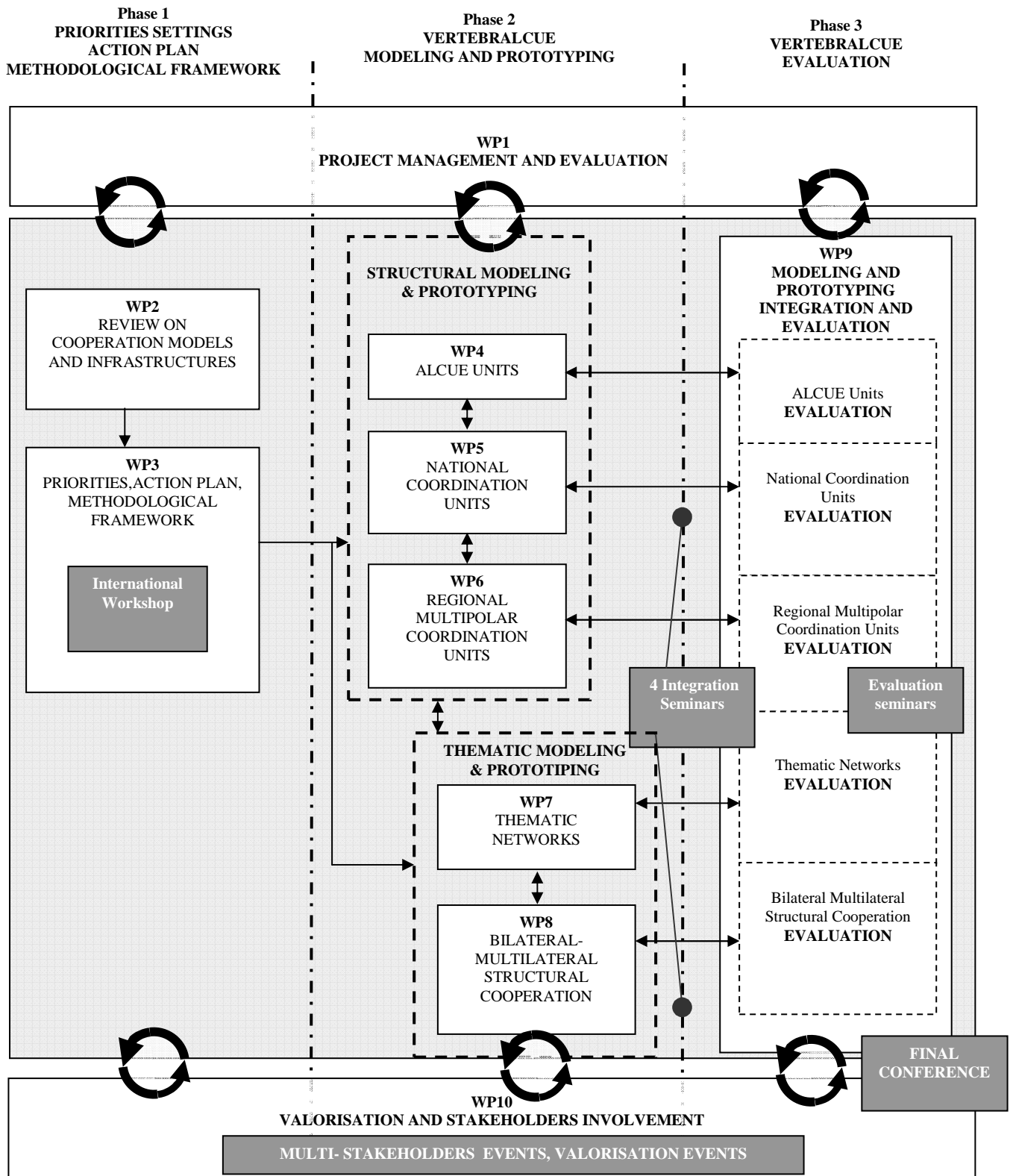
Project management and evaluation activities, and especially valorisation and stakeholders’ involvement activities, will accompany the project activities in all of the three main phases.

The project activities will be organized in the following workpackages that will develop throughout the three project phases:

- WP1 – PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION (all Phases)**
- WP2 – REVIEW ON COOPERATION MODELS AND INFRASTRUCTURES (Phase 1)**
- WP3 – PRIORITIES, ACTION PLAN, METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK (Phase 1)**
- WP4 – ALCUE UNITS (Phase 2)**
- WP5 – NATIONAL COORDINATION UNITS (Phase 2)**
- WP6 – REGIONAL MULTIPOLAR COORDINATION UNITS (Phase 2)**
- WP7 – THEMATIC NETWORKS (Phase2)**
- WP8 – BILATERAL-MULTILATERAL STRUCTURAL COOPERATION (Phase2)**
- WP9 – MODELING AND PROTOTYPING INTEGRATION AND EVALUATION (Phase 3)**
- WP10 - VALORISATION AND STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVEMENT (all Phases)**

In the following representation, the sequence and links of the different Work Packages in relation to the three project phases is presented. Activities of WP1 and WP 10 will be implanted throughout the all project’s phases, while the other Work Packages are inserted in the correspondent phase. The main events of the proposed project are indicated:

- International Workshop, “Towards an ALCUE HE Cooperation Infrastructure”, planned for Month 10
- A local Evaluation Seminar for each of the 13 Beneficiary Countries of the Partners (planned for month 16 to month 21) and 4 Evaluation Seminars, planned in year 3 First semester and first half of the second one
- 4 Integration Seminars, to integrate ALCUE Units, National, Regional, Thematic and Bilateral-Multilateral cooperation models among each other in the VERTEBRALCUE infrastructure, planned in year 3 First semester and first half of the second one
- Multistakeholders and Dissemination Events, throughout all Phases, planned in WP10
- The Final Conference, planned for Month 35.



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ANNEX B to the VertebrALCUE Association Agreement:

ALCUE UNIT, TENTATIVE LIST of ACTIVITIES EXPECTED for EACH METAFUNCTION

ALCUE UNIT

TENTATIVE LIST of ACTIVITIES EXPECTED for EACH METAFUNCTION

METAFUNCTIONS	ACTIVITIES
Looking inside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying internal stakeholders (SH) - meeting internal SH, informing them and raising awareness about the AU and its functions and potential; - identifying int. SHs' needs; - identifying int. SHs' possible contributions to the AU work; - developing a database for all internal stakeholders on international cooperation (including previous experiences, both successful and not); - finding best ways to communicate with them;
Looking outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying external stakeholders (SH) - meeting external SH to inform them and raise awareness about the AU and its functions and potential; - identifying ext. SHs' expectations, needs and ideas related to cooperation with LA to which the AU can respond; - identifying points of contact and collaboration with the ext. SHs; - finding best ways to communicate with ext. SHs in terms of outgoing communication and encouraging incoming one;
Involve Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organising workshops/meetings with internal SHs in order to set up common strategies and modalities of collaboration and exploit the AU potential; - organising workshops/meetings with external stakeholders in order to get their feedback as to best collaborate and respond to their needs and expectations;
Cooperating at National level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drawing a picture of all national relevant counterparts and the best corresponding type of cooperation possible (specific aims, modes, other actors to involve, how to do so, etc.) - Inform national authorities, Rectors' Conference, Quality Assurance Agencies and other universities of the country on the AU existence and its international network,
Working for sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying possible support and sources of income (public funding, services, sponsorship, partnerships etc.);
Supporting all actors involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - facilitating SHs interested in international cooperation to use the AU potential as a bridge and a supporter for their contacts, projects and initiatives;
Promoting the ALCUE cooperation philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informing SHs about policy aim and implementation lines of the ALCUE cooperation area of HE (not all EU academic community being aware of that); - Proving that the ALCUE cooperation philosophy works (so to encourage SHs and others to join in);
Being active in the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating in the VertebrALCUE learning community; - providing information to the VertebrALCUE database and to the VertebrALCUE website; - promoting partnerships and collaboration projects and initiatives
Result/impact evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing success criteria and monitoring approaches; - Comparing them with those of other Alcue Units (informal benchmarking and bench-learning);