



## The ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D

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### Project 'Advanced Technology Higher Education Network Alliance – ATHENA'<sup>1</sup>

Work package 4 – Research: Stimulating research within the Alliance

Task 4.1: Cooperation model for R&D

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#### Aim and scope

ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D<sup>2</sup> aims to improve bridging the gap between the conceptualisation of *new ideas* and the *innovation* as a process or product itself. The ATHENA partnership will establish the ATHENA Cooperation Network - a comprehensive network of regional entry points and innovation and support services to strengthen common R&D fields and topics. As a part of this comprehensive network, each partner institution will introduce a regional entry point, responsible for (1) directing enterprises and other external partners to relevant R&D and other service providers within the network, (2) helping to find the right solutions and partners, (3) bracing and supporting the cooperation within the ATHENA partnership. The ATHENA Cooperation Network will encompass qualified experts from different areas of support with in-depth knowledge of the R&D environment as well as the national and international economy. The ATHENA Cooperation Network will be overseen, guided and steered by a Research Board composed of representatives of partner institutions.

#### Architecture of the model

ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D is of open design and enables a needed level of flexibility to the partner institutions regarding the specifics of the management modes and organisational structure of the partner institutions; availability of resources, research orientation and needs; specifics of the regional and national environment in which the partner institutions operate; macroeconomic, social and other conditions. The model consists of the following elements:

- ATHENA Research Board,
- ATHENA Cooperation Network: The regional entry points,
- ATHENA Cooperation Network: The regional networks,
- Stakeholders.

The structure of the ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D is presented in *Appendix 1*.

#### ATHENA Research Board<sup>3</sup>

**Mission:** The Research Board is a governance board that focuses on the planning and decisions regarding the research priorities and synergies within ATHENA partnership.

**Governance and Membership in the Research Board:** The Research Board is staffed by the vice rectors or other senior representatives of research in the partner institutions. All partner institutions are

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<sup>2</sup> Research and Innovation (R&I) terminology is used in the European Research Area (in compliance with the European research and innovation policy).

<sup>3</sup> The Research Board is an integral part of the ATHENA Governance model and is presented in the ATHENA Governance Book.



equally represented. The Research Board is governed by the Athena member institution in rotation (every six months or in an annual base following the same rotation as this one of the Executive Board). Coordinators of the regional entry points, students, industrial partners and other stakeholders can participate in an observatory and consulting role, without voting rights.

**Activities/Competences/Authority/Field:** The main activity of the board is decision-making in the following fields related to R&D:

- Definition of the research priorities within ATHENA partnership.
- The mapping of the research expertise existing within ATHENA partnership.
- Reviewing and assessing ATHENA's R&D programs and strategies.
- Monitoring and overseeing the ATHENA's progress in achieving R&D goals and objectives, and make recommendations to the Administration Board on modifications to the ATHENA's R&D goals and objectives.
- Decides on major R&D issues (e.g., large joint R&D projects, new joint R&D initiatives, membership in international consortia, networks ...).
- Reviewing progress, strategic alignment and impact and financial management of approved projects.
- Regulation of shared PhD programmes in collaboration with the Education Board.
- Definition of responsible Conduct of Research and research ethics policy and rules.
- Definitions of shared facilities/research infrastructure policy and rules.
- Planning of joint dissemination actions (in collaboration with the Branding & Communication Office) related to the Athena research outcomes (e.g. products, publications, organization of research conferences).
- Identifying and reporting to the Administration Board on significant emerging R&D issues and trends that may impact ATHENA.
- Advise the Administration Board on risk management in areas related to R&D.
- Annual reporting to the Executive Board.
- Other issues in the field of R&D to be adopted by the Executive Board.

**Convocation of Meetings and Standing Orders:** As per the Executive Board. Exception: in case of reasonable causes (e.g. operability, time) processes may be regulated individually based on the agreement of the board members.

### **ATHENA Cooperation Network: The regional entry points**

The ATHENA Cooperation Network is composed of **regional entry points** of the partner institutions and should operate comprehensively and efficiently. The minimal requirement for establishing a regional entry point is an engaged group of qualified professionals able to respond to requests and initiatives as well as to provide support to all stakeholders in the ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D.

Each regional entry point must be accessible by a unique e-mail address. Each regional entry point has a coordinator (person).

The partner institutions' regional entry points are connected into **ATHENA Cooperation Network** and work in close cooperation with one another and share information on:

- Research needs and opportunities, which would be relevant and supportive to the ATHENA partnership.
- Specific and complementary R&D knowledge and services between partner institutions.
- Research and professional job opportunities and fellowships.



- Mobility opportunities for researchers, students and other staff focusing on exchanges of staff in support services.
- Opportunities for students to participate in R&D and projects.
- Opportunities of open access to research infrastructure and services (when relevant).
- Training opportunities for researchers and other staff, focusing on staff in support of services.
- Best practices and future trends related to R&D.
- Other.

The structure and cooperation links of the regional entry point of an individual partner institution are presented in *Appendix 2*.

### **ATHENA Cooperation Network: The regional networks**

Each regional entry point has the following **coordination tasks** on the level of the **regional network** of each partner institution:

- Providing information in one place (single point of contact).
- Coordinating the regional network.
- Monitoring the implementation of services and quality assurance.
- Analysing and identifying needs at the regional and global levels.
- Organising training and networking for support service providers.

Each partner institution provides the following **support services** within its **regional network** (in cooperation with its regional entry point):

- **Facilitating contacts with relevant R&D partners**, including the identification of needs of economic partners and linking enterprises with relevant R&D partners at universities in order to conduct: (applied) research, prototyping, testing in accordance with certified methods, development of products and technologies, joint purchasing of R&D equipment, networking between research organisations and enterprises in order to promote the transfer of scientific findings to the business sector and the wider social environment; looking for relevant national and international partners in order to establish R&D consortia for obtaining funds under various funding schemes.
- **Development of national and international (European) projects** – identification of relevant calls for proposals for R&D or applied projects and assistance in the formation of relevant consortia between research partners, economic partners and other partners; providing support for the preparation of project documentation, financial, administrative and legal project management and coordination and preparation of financial reports.
- **Facilitating participation of students in R&D activities.**
- **Promoting collaboration with the existing research centres of excellence, EU networks and similar.**
- **Promoting R&D achievements in the general public.**
- **Promoting and facilitating innovation and knowledge/technology transfer:**
  - o **Promoting and facilitating innovation:** assessing the innovation potential of enterprises, providing advisory support during the R&D phase, creating R&D Challenge Windows (periods of time during which companies may submit challenges to be solved by the ATHENA Alliance and afterwards announcing internal calls for the R&D challenges proposed by companies), organising networking and matchmaking events, promoting best practices, organising awareness-raising events, following and promoting sector-specific trends, advisory support on effective management of innovations;



- **Intellectual property management:** assessing the possibility of intellectual property protection, assisting in the protection of inventions through intellectual property rights, assistance in managing legal relations related to intellectual property management, offering advisory services related to IP in general or on specific issues;
- **Commercialisation:** assessing the market potential of inventions, identification of partnership opportunities and establishing cooperation with relevant business partners, conducting activities for marketing of the intellectual property, assisting in negotiations for the selling of intellectual property rights or the conclusion of licensing contracts, assisting in the invention's entry into the market, supporting global commercialisation of knowledge and inventions, assisting in the establishment of spin-offs.
- **Entrepreneurship** – consultancy and other activities for the start-up of new enterprises, start-up incubation and support for global growth.
- **Promoting and facilitating** (international, intersectoral, etc.) **mobility of researchers.**
- **Promoting open access to research infrastructure and services.**
- **Promoting and organising training and capacity building** for researchers, support service providers and other relevant stakeholders.

### **Stakeholders**

The stakeholders in the model that regional entry points connect on the path from the idea to innovation are:

- ATHENA partner institutions (researchers and teaching staff, students and other relevant entities).
- Participating R&D institutions and industry (stakeholders already actively involved in cooperation with the ATHENA partner institutions).
- Identified R&D institutions and industry interested in cooperation.

### **Appendixes**

*Appendix 1:* The structure of the ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D.

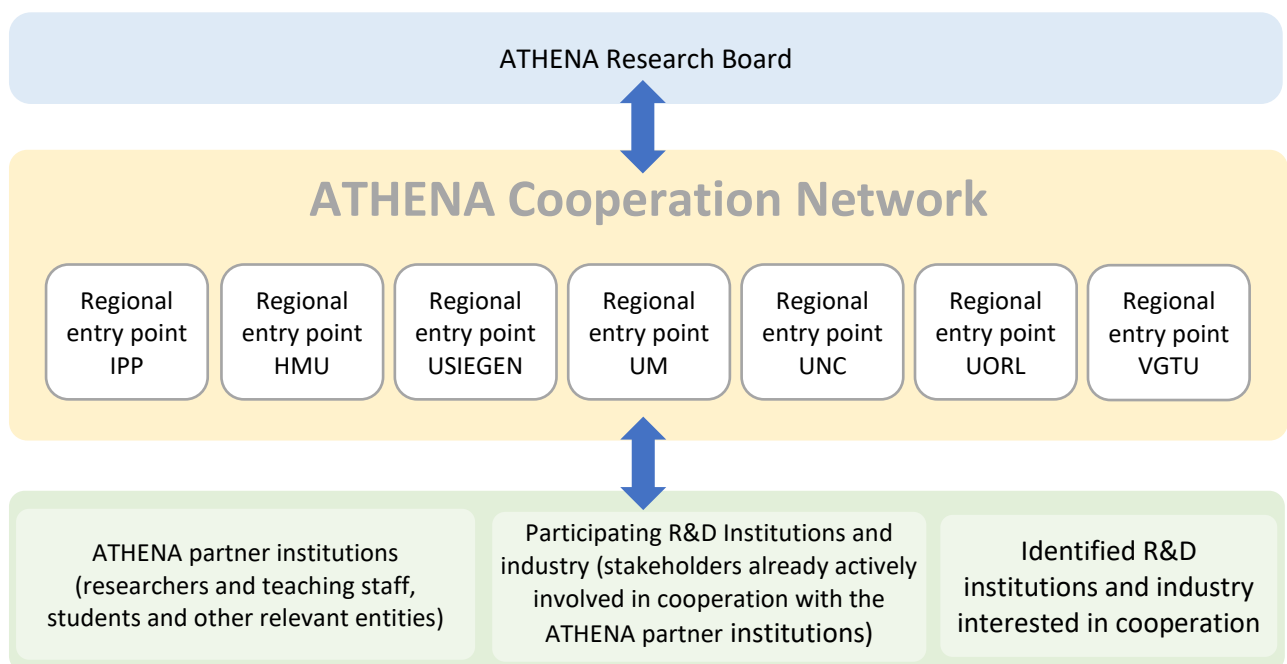
*Appendix 2:* The structure and cooperation links of the regional entry point of an individual partner institution.

*Appendix 3:* Checklist of compliance with the ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D.



## Appendix 1 The Cooperation Model for R&D

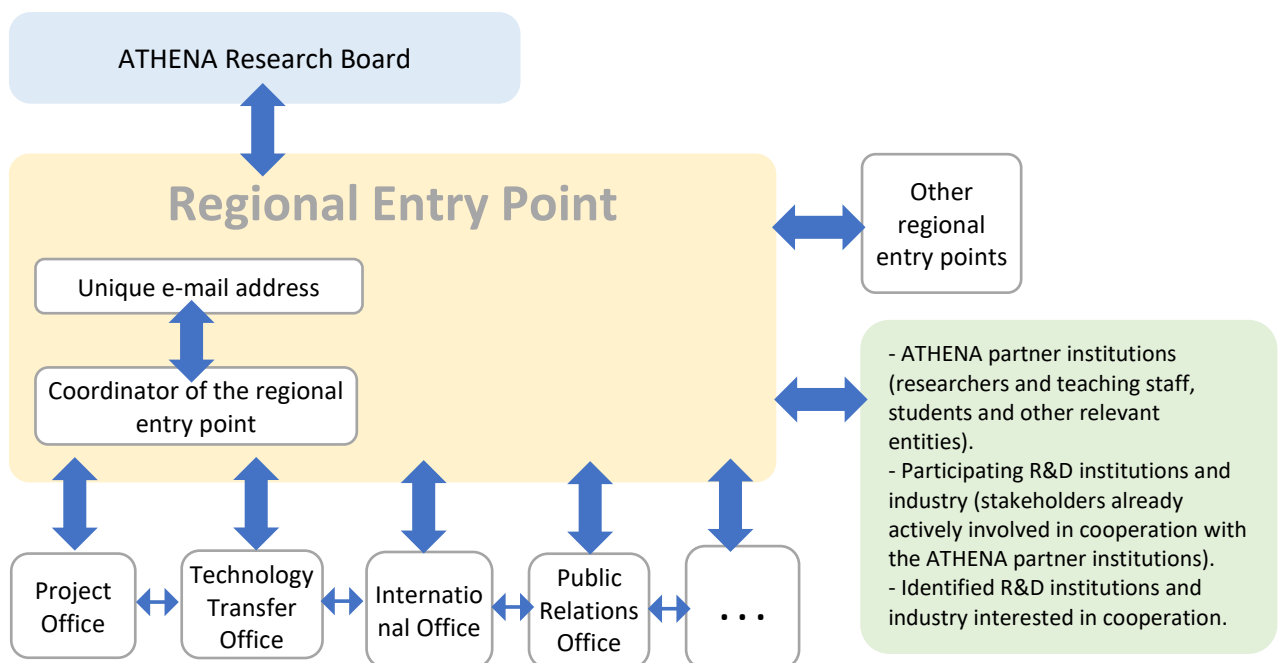
The structure of the Athena Cooperation Model for R&D





## Appendix 2 The Cooperation Model for R&D

The structure and cooperation links of the regional entry point of an individual partner institution





## Appendix 3

### The Cooperation Model for R&D

#### Checklist of compliance with the ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D

Each partner institution considers whether it is implementing the following set of activities in accordance with the ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D.

Activities	Reference to the relevant ATHENA task and/or deliverable	Example to the activity/organisational unit at partner institution
<b>General</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D is approved by the partner institution.		
<input type="checkbox"/> The partner institution has appropriate resources (e.g. knowledge, staff, infrastructure) for operation in accordance with the ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D.		
<input type="checkbox"/> The regional access point of the partner institution, a uniform e-mail address, is set up.		
<input type="checkbox"/> A regional access point coordinator of the partner institution is appointed.		
<input type="checkbox"/> The regional access point of the partner institution is actively cooperating with other regional access points within the ATHENA Cooperation Network in accordance with the ATHENA Cooperation Model for R&D.		
<b>Facilitating contacts with relevant R&amp;D partners</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The partner institution is aware of R&D needs and challenges of its regional and national environment as well as globally.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Within its regional network, the partner institution has set up a system for monitoring and keeping record of the needs of external stakeholders, the researchers' engagement as well as their integration for various R&D cooperation purposes.		
<b>Development of national and international (European) projects</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed F01 questionnaire (analysis of the situation - definition of the partner institution's research fields).		
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed and maintained F02 questionnaire (definition of priority research topics of the partner institution for a common catalogue of the ATHENA partnership).		
<input type="checkbox"/> Getting acquainted with the results of the situation analysis regarding cross-sectional research fields of partner institutions (F01) and the catalogue of priority research topics of partner institutions (F02) for targeted promotion of R&D cooperation at ATHENA partnership level.		



<input type="checkbox"/>	Periodically monitoring and analysing public calls relevant for the joint application of projects within the ATHENA partnership.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each partner institution proposes at least 1 joint project application of the interested Athena partner institutions per year.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each partner institution is continuously keeping records of submitted and approved project applications to various public calls in the central/joint record of applications and approved projects at ATHENA partnership level.		
<b>Facilitating participation of students in R&amp;D activities</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed F03 questionnaire (performed situation analysis on the existing forms of student cooperation in R&D).		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Getting acquainted with the results of the situation analysis (F03) on the existing forms of student cooperation in R&D and selected forms with the potential for a joint introduction at ATHENA partnership level.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation of the selected forms of student involvement in R&D on a single website for all students of the ATHENA partnership.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Promoting and informing students of a particular partner institution at ATHENA partnership level on the offered/possible forms of cooperation in R&D through various information channels.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Students of the partner institution actively take part in the offered forms of cooperation in R&D at the ATHENA partnership level.		
<b>Promoting collaboration with the existing research centres of excellence, EU networks and similar</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	The partner institution monitors and proposes the collaboration with the research centres of excellence, EU networks, etc. that are considered to have additional value for the ATHENA partnership.		
<b>Promoting R&amp;D achievements in the general public</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	The partner institution actively takes part in the preparation of the ATHENA Annual Book.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	The partner institution actively takes part in publishing contributions on the ATHENA website as well as through other communication channels.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	The partner institution takes part in the application (in case of project approval in the implementation) of a Horizon Europe, MSCA, European Researchers' Night project.		
<b>Promoting and facilitating innovation and knowledge/technology transfer</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	The partner institution is responsible for promoting and facilitating innovation.	WP 6	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The partner institution is responsible for intellectual property management.	WP 6	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The partner institution is responsible for the appropriate commercialisation of knowledge.	WP 6	





<input type="checkbox"/> The partner institution properly promotes entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial culture.	WP 6	
<b>Promoting and facilitating mobility of researchers</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The partner institution implements staff mobility (e.g. researchers) within the ATHENA partnership as part of various mobility schemes (e.g. Erasmus+).	WP 7	
<input type="checkbox"/> The partner institution is interested in the application of a joint ATHENA partnership project for the promotion of scientific excellence as part of the international and cross-sectoral mobility in doctoral and postdoctoral education (Horizon Europe, MSCA, Doctoral Networks and Postdoctoral Fellowships).		
<b>Promoting open access to research infrastructure and services</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The partner institution prepares a list of research infrastructure enabling open access or its shared usage at ATHENA partnership level.		
<b>Promoting and organising training and capacity building for researchers, support service providers and other relevant stakeholders</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Each partner institution organizes at least 2 thematic trainings for researchers, support service providers and other relevant stakeholders within the ATHENA partnership per year.		