

CRUI Working Group on Promotion of the Italian University System

The beauty of Italy and its quality of life

Our institutions work in close contact with the cities and regions in which they are located in reinforcing and expand existing synergies. As universities, we make our educational offer more competitive by having them respond to the specific needs of our respective territories and by providing skills that are in demand so as increase the attractiveness of the area for international students and researchers.

Our proposals adapt to specific territories such as cities rich in cultural heritage, smaller centres with a high quality of life, research-intensive technological centers:

- We promote curricula associated with national, territorial and local specificities (e.g., agri-food systems, sustainable tourism, cultural heritage, archaeological routes, etc.);
- We exploit existing synergies based on the competitiveness of our higher education system and on the importance of cooperation among universities as well as between universities and local authorities;
- We foster international mobility projects in collaboration with the municipality, the region and other local authorities (internships, cultural travels, study abroad programs);
- We promote the “Italian way of life”, highlighting its main characteristics and its excellence at both local and national levels;
- We organize joint missions abroad involving representatives of our universities as well as representatives of municipalities, regions, entrepreneurial associations, etc. These missions should permit the promotion of both the offerings/opportunities of the territory and our educational offer (for example, the university could take advantage of the opportunities afforded by such missions in order to sign MoU with partners or promote specific programs);
- We coordinate the welcome and hosting of international delegations coming to town through a collaboration between our universities, the municipality and the region in order to better showcase the excellence of the territory in synergy with its university teaching and research.
- We strengthen the role of “civic university”, highlighting the ways in which the university contributes to and integrates itself into the urban community. For instance, our universities could offer special programs focused on the integration of disabled students, courses for the incarcerated aimed at reintegrating them into society, programs for refugees (with scholarships). They could also organize public debates open to the city

(something that could be called “meet the city” and could explore topics of particular interest to local citizens; the debates could be introduced by university professors on Sunday morning once a month, and could also be streamed online) as well as other activities – for instance, on environmental and sustainability issues – targeted at primary and secondary school students (these could be called “Ask Unixx” and advertised). In short, each of our universities should be an active and participatory civic actor in their respective territories.

- We promote internships and traineeships for international students at local companies and institutions;
- We promote, in collaboration with the municipality and other relevant stakeholders, agreements to lower the cost of rent for international students and visiting professors in order to make the city more attractive to them;
- We facilitate the “aggregation” of universities that are geographically near to one another in order to promote the regional territory and share the management of international students and Erasmus students (incoming and outgoing), thereby increasing the efficiency of services; in addition, these consortia could organize and propose joint activities in teaching and research as well as in logistics in order to avoid duplications.