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## The LEAD2 Project Launched

Capacity Building in Higher Education project supported by the Erasmus+ programme runs from January 2019-January 2022

LAST MODIFIED: 27 MARCH 2019

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The **LEAD2 project**, coordinated by VUB, is a Capacity Building in Higher Education under the Erasmus+ program and runs from January 2019 to January 2022. The LEAD2 kick-off meeting successfully took place at VUB from 20-22 March 2019.

The LEAD2 kick-off meeting hosted participants representing 12 LEAD2 partners and important stakeholders such as the European Commission and China Mission to the EU. Participants included vice-rectors, deans, vice-deans and other academic and administrative staff of faculties and schools from both European and Chinese Higher Education Institutions.

Prof. Romain MEEUSEN, VUB Vice-Rector Internationalisation, welcomed all participants on behalf of VUB. The Minister-counsellor for Education and Culture from the China Mission to the EU, the representative from the European Commission's DG Education and Culture, and Vice President YU Jingtian from the National Academy of Education Administration, also addressed at the kick-off

ceremony. The [LEAD book on 'University Governance and Academic Leadership'](#) was also released at the event.

Preparatory meetings had been productive as they provided a clear picture of the LEAD2 project and a series of activities which will be held. During the partners meeting session, each partner had the opportunity to present their institution and goals for the LEAD2 project. In addition, the strategic work plans and the arrangement of project activities were discussed and optimised.

Keynote speeches at the kick-off meeting and the workshops were insightful and accompanied by intense discussions. The points raised touched on key issues concerning university academic leadership development in both China and Europe, including the contribution of incorporated analytics in decision-making, the importance of considering paradoxical leadership as a necessary approach, and old and new challenges for leaders in higher education.

During the LEAD2 project, blended training and learning (including [MOOCs](#), workshops and peer learning) will take place in both Europe and China.

Furthermore, the importance of comparative studies regarding university governance and academic leadership was emphasised in lively debates. The potential research results are highlighted as additional contributions for future collaboration between Chinese and European universities towards academic leadership development.

Throughout the three days of the LEAD2 kick-off meeting, several case studies and practices toward university governance and academic leadership were shared by European and Chinese participants. Differences and similarities were found in understanding and responding to the perceptions and practices of academic leadership. Stakeholders from both sides shared a common concern that leaders, regardless of their academic levels and contexts, are facing both old and new challenges in decision-making and strategic planning. It is, therefore, essential to strengthen cooperation and communication amongst all partners and stakeholders to share experiences and learn from each other.

The LEAD2 kick-off meeting and workshops have created a solid foundation for the implementation of the work plan and cooperation. These exchange activities have strengthened the current cooperation as well as the discussions and establishment of further collaboration among all partners and actors involved. The next LEAD2 event will be a first series of LEAD2 workshops on Academic Leadership in Beijing, China, in June 2019.

**For more information, please visit the [LEAD2 project website](#)**



More information regarding the previous project can be found on the [LEAD project website](#)

Access to the [LEAD MOOC on "University Governance and Academic Leadership"](#) (free of charge) by clicking the link behind the title.



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