

# E-ZINE

JUNE 2024

Bringing Excellence to  
Transformative Socially  
Engaged Research  
in Life Sciences through  
Integrated  
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# Introduction

An essential part of the BETTER Life project is the series of Capacity Building Actions. Capacity-building activities provide ECRs with opportunities (such as mentorship programs, or specially trained engagement managers), and knowledge (new methods and information concerning SER). During the Capacity Building Actions we plan to utilise the tools that were worked out during WP 3 in alignment with WP2 standards and operational goals. As a result, Socially Engaged Research will be more accessible for ECRs in life sciences at Partners' Higher Education Institutions.

This work package is essential part of Better Life Project, since capacity building activities give a possibility to try the tools worked out in WP3, and popularise the digital excellence centre, giving the possibilities for feedback. Besides, at this phase, ECRs can actually participate, obtain the skills and knowledge that are needed for conducting engaged research.

There are five tasks in WP4. As a first step, we worked out the Capacity Building Plan. Secondly, we organised Thinktank Sessions aimed at creating a Mentorship program for all Higher Education Institution Partners within our Project. As a third step, an online Winter School was held (for ECRs from all Partner countries and beyond).

Following this, three series of boot camps at each higher Education Partner Institution are organised for ECR and engagement managers (this task is still ongoing), and as a last task, an on-site international Summer school will be organised in September, 2024.

## Twenty Years in the EU: An Interview with Professor Michal Lošťák



**PODCAST PLNÝ ŽIVOTA**  
prof. PhDr. Michal Lošťák, Ph.D.  
Prorektor pro mezinárodní vztahy

**EPIZODA #63**

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- How has the academic life of teachers and students changed after joining the European Union?
- What has been the contribution in the field of science and research?
- How important are European Union projects?
- And what is the BETTER Life project all about?

These questions, among others, were answered in a special episode of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CZU) podcast on the 20th anniversary of the Czech Republic's accession to the EU by Professor Michal Lošťák, 1st Vice-Rector of CZU and the principal investigator of the BETTER Life project.

Jak se proměnil akademický život pedagogů a studentů po vstupu do Evropské unie? Jaký byl přínos v oblasti vědy a výzkumu? Změnilo se po 1. květnu 2004 postavení ČZU na mezinárodním poli? A bylo by pro univerzitu výhodou zavedení eura namísto koruny? Nejen na tyto otázky odpoví ve speciální epizodě k dvacátému výročí vstupu České republiky do EU profesor Michal Lošťák, 1. prorektor ČZU a zástupce Provozně ekonomické fakulty.

For more information, see:  
<https://zivauni.cz/20-let-v-eu-podcast/>  
(Czech language only).

#63 20 let od vstupu do Evropské unie

Podcast plný života



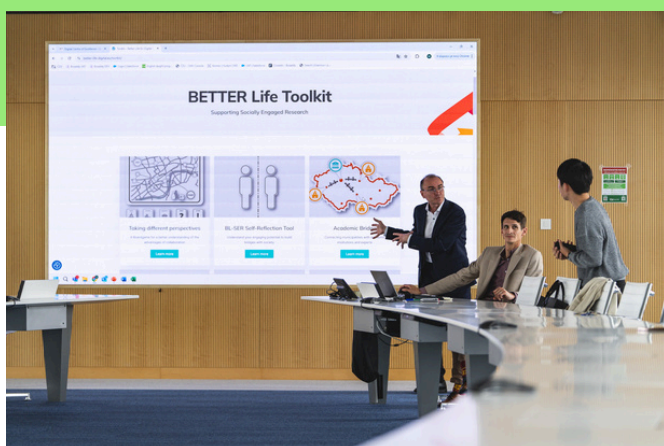
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# BETTER Life Welcomed South Korean Gwacheon Delegation



During the visit of the delegation from the municipality council and administration of the South Korean city of Gwacheon on May 6, 2024, Michal Lošťák (Principal Investigator of the BETTER Life project) presented the toolkits developed under the BETTER Life project.



The reason for this presentation was the delegation's questions about the universities' role in supporting the quadruple helix. The delegation was interested in the toolkit "Academic Bridge". The members of the delegation appreciated this toolkit as an important tool for developing relations between universities and municipalities.

[BETTER Life Project Toolkits Presented to South Korean Gwacheon Delegation: Enhancing University-Municipality Collaboration](#)





# BETTER Life Project Contributes Groundbreaking Research on Bioeconomy Engagement in Southeast Asia

**The members of the BETTER Life project have recently published an article titled “Bioeconomy in Countries of the Mekong Region: Stakeholder Understanding and Perceptions in Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos.” This groundbreaking research delves into the societal engagement aspects surrounding the bioeconomy concept in Southeast Asian countries. Through a comprehensive analysis comprising qualitative document examination and a questionnaire distributed to various stakeholders, the study sheds light on the perceptions, challenges, and potential pathways for bioeconomy development in Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos.**

In connecting this research with the objectives of the BETTER Life project, which focuses on socially engaged research in life sciences, there is a clear alignment in their shared emphasis on societal involvement and collaboration. The findings from the Mekong region underscore the critical importance of engaging stakeholders across sectors and fostering greater awareness and understanding of the bioeconomy. These insights resonate deeply with the core ethos of the BETTER Life project, which endeavours to integrate diverse perspectives and facilitate collaboration among research institutions, policymakers, industry stakeholders, and communities to effect positive societal change.

**Read the full article here:**

[Bioeconomy in countries of the Mekong region: Stakeholder understanding and perceptions in Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos – ScienceDirect](#)



# Capacity Building Plan and Thinktank Sessions



**As the first activity within WP4, the Capacity Building Plan provides the reader with essential information and instructional background, along with the assessment and evaluation guidelines for the planned activities (i.e., think-tank sessions, boot camps for ECRs, boot camps for EMs, virtual international winter school, and on-site summer school). This document serves as a useful guideline, primarily for Partners, and, taken as a basis, can be further developed as a comprehensive plan for the activities.**

Think tank sessions were organized with the general aim of discussing the possibilities for starting a mentorship program and were held at all Higher Education Institution (HEI) Partners. These think tank sessions are activities that reflect the diverse environments among HEI partners.

Since there are several definitions of mentorship, we adopt the definition of research mentoring by Horowitz and Christopher (2013): “A formal mentor-mentee relationship in a setting that can range from formal (research presentations, advising meetings, lab meetings) to informal (fieldwork, laboratory work, social lab gatherings, conversations).”

This approach allows us to treat the mentorship program as a diverse type of organization that can be adapted to the institutional possibilities of the Partners.





*Introduction of the think tank session in Poznan University of Life Sciences (Prof Tryjanowski)*

Poznan University of Life Sciences (PULS) invited 13 participants for two onsite events, and the third event was organized online as a consultation for the proposed mentorship program. The focus was on how to organize a mentorship program for ECRs on SER within the institutional possibilities of PULS. Participants agreed that the mentorship activity at PULS should encompass a wide range of advisory activities where ECRs can obtain knowledge, network information, and advice on how to start engaged research. Participants also agreed to act as mentors and assist in in eventual mentor search among stakeholders if needed. However, despite the existence of two other ongoing mentorship programs at PULS, a fully accredited novel program cannot be initiated without additional financial input.

UNICAM organized three online sessions, discussed the methods of mentor-mentee selection and the scope of the potential mentorship program (which has a somewhat wider scope compared to the planned program at Poznan University of Life Sciences). Another partner, EDUCONS, organized all think tank sessions on site. Stakeholders, academics, and ECRs addressed issues concerning engaged research and the need for the mentorship program. As a result of their think tank session, eighteen mentors volunteered for the mentorship program (many of whom were stakeholders). These examples demonstrate the diverse palette of institutional environments that require different approaches and possibilities for capacity building.

Mentorship programs can be presented at the boot camps and advertised via participants or other information channels of the organizations.







“Think Tank: Socially-  
Oriented Success:  
Mentorship Programme  
for  
Advanced Early Career  
Researchers”



**On Wednesday, January 17, 2024, at the University Educons in Sremska Kamenica, public event within the framework of the BetterLife project (number 101071314, funded under the HORIZON EUROPE program) was held under the title: “Think Tank: Socially-oriented success: Mentorship Program for Advanced early career researchers.”**

The event was designed as a meeting with representatives of decision-makers, industry, the social community, academic community, science and students. It was opened by Dr. Mladen Petreš, the assistant of the provincial secretary for agriculture, water management, and forestry. In addition, Prof. Dr. Andrea Andrejević Panic, Vice-Rector for Science and International Cooperation, greeted the participants on behalf of the University. Prof. Dr. Gordana Racić shared basic information about the project with the participants. Danica Mulić briefed the participants on the work of the Digital Center of Excellence and explained the development of the ten tools available for young researchers to enhance their work.



Event at which professors and scientists from the University Educons, representatives from the government, non-governmental and academic sectors, as well as young researchers (PhD students) participated, consisted of two main sessions.

Within the session "Innovations in Practice: Transformation of Scientific Results with the Support of the Mentorship Program," Dr. Marija Lesjak, Dr. Srđan Miletić, and Mr. Bogdan Žigić shared experiences and knowledge with young researchers about the path of transferring laboratory innovations to business success and social recognition, the differentiation between fundamental and applied research, and the importance of communication among academia, industry, government, and society actors. A list of 18 mentors/experts registered for the establishment of a mentorship program at the national Serbian Better Life Digital Center of Excellence. Mentors were asked to consider and give their consent for the completed form to be posted on the website of the regional center along with their photograph.





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*HERBELixa, dr Marija Lesjak*

Dr. Marija Lesjak presented her company, which is a spin-off company that emerged from her own research when she was an early career researcher. HerbElixia is a private company that produces dietary supplements based on medicinal herbs. Their focus is on products made of essential oils that can help in the treatment of various conditions and diseases. Their products are exclusively based on scientific facts and results. All products are unique because they are made according to their own recipe.

Dr Srdjan Miletic, Assistant Research Professor at the Institute of Chemistry, Technology & Metallurgy, University of Belgrade, presented his own research and work in the field of Bioremediation. He was proud to present the results of his and his team's work, which can be seen in the picture below, demonstrating the successful treatment of the field through bioremediation. He highlighted the close cooperation with BREM Group company (<http://www.bremgroup.com>) in the application of microorganisms and the scale-up process of bioremediation, expanding from flask to a field of over 700 m<sup>3</sup> of contaminated soil. In addition to contaminated soil, they also worked with underground water, waste oil, chemicals, etc.



*Experiments carried out between Institute of Chemistry, Technology & Metallurgy and BREM group*

**In the end of the first session, Mr Bogdan Zigic presented his company, Biofor System Ltd. It is a production company in applied biotechnology that creates unique and innovative products in the field of agriculture. The synergy of their knowledge in soil microbiology, agronomic practices, and superior traits of selected microorganisms results in products whose application leads to healthy plants and increased soil fertility. Today, their products are present in markets in the countries of the region and in four European Union countries.**

The second session was conducted through a workshop where participants, both mentors and ECRs, had an opportunity to define the skills and knowledge they consider necessary for an ECR to have from different perspectives.

Mentors discussed their own expectations and hopes for the early career researchers, while the ECRs talked about their considerations, worries, and obstacles they hope to overcome with the help of mentors. Mentors identified the following skills as important for young researchers to have: teamwork, communication, paper writing, laboratory work, planning and forecasting, project writing, public speaking, networking with colleagues abroad, literature search, learning how to learn, patience, tolerance, perseverance, independence in work, and willingness. Regarding knowledge, mentors emphasized the importance of foreign language skills, statistics, as well as designing and setting up experiments.

It all started through scientific projects funded by the Ministry of Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia and research at the Agricultural Faculty in Zemun. By applying scientific achievements and respecting nature, they have developed formulations of Biofor microbiological fertilizers.



*Products of the BIOFOR company (<https://biofor.rs/>)*

On the other hand, doctoral students listed the following skills they consider important to master: identification of areas of interest and significance, negotiation skills, transfer of practical knowledge for scientific paper writing, connection with scientific and business communities, time management, reaction to failure/rejection, leadership and motivation, presentation skills, and application of theoretical knowledge in practice. In addition to the above, PhD students believe that the following knowledge is important for their success: organization and selection of data, selection and mastery of new research methods, administrative processes, and setting realistic predictions.



During the workshop, young researchers were informed about the upcoming online winter school and boot camps that will be offered to them to start working on the skills and knowledge defined during the workshop.



# Virtual International Spring School for Early Career Researchers



**Welcome to the second issue of the BETTER Life e-zine! In this edition, we are thrilled to showcase our contribution to the Virtual International Spring School for Early Career Researchers held on 09.04.2024. From exemplary research approaches to key indicators, the Spring school featured practical guidance on the enablers of SER at both institutional and project research. We hope you find inspiration and valuable insights in the following highlights. Happy reading!**

## Project highlights

### **Title:**

Socially Engaged Research in Academic Research: Mechanisms and Expectations

### **Featured images:**

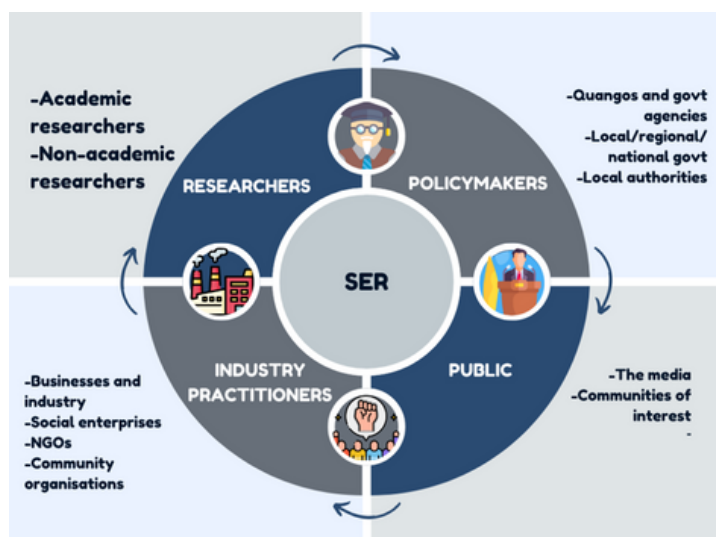
A collection of pictures showing online participants and frameworks from the PowerPoint presentations

### **Description:**

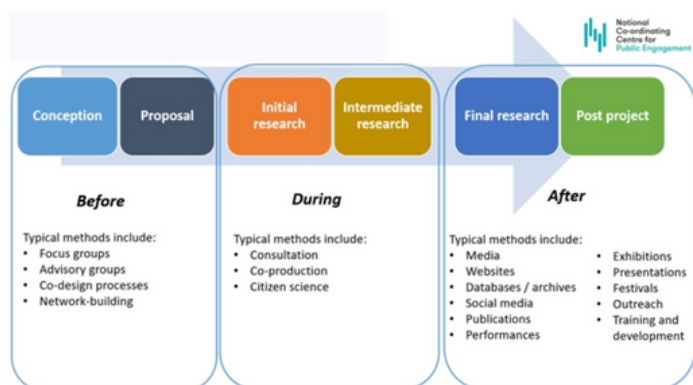
Following the development of the tools to foster research in alignment with the SER framework and standards, we facilitated a presentation in the BETTER Life virtual international Spring school on how socially engaged research works, including its expectations. The presentation kicked off with an engaging Mentimeter activity that assessed participants' perception on the engagement elements in research. Specifically, at the project research level, the following indicators were identified.

At the institutional level, there is a consensus that providing support structures, networking and collaboration opportunities, and training and development is crucial for promoting the adoption of SER approaches across the university.

Zooming in on the project research level, SER occurs in Mode 3 knowledge production, signifying the co-evolution of knowledge and innovation across multi-level systems and stakeholders. This knowledge production mode is impact-driven research, defined by its contributions to addressing societal problems. The quadruple helix stakeholders, including university, policymakers, industry practitioners, and the general public, have been recognized as essential stakeholders that need to be involved in the conduct of socially engaged research.



Opportunities for engaging these stakeholders lie in involving them in all or relevant phases of research. Stakeholder engagement approaches were, in fact, one of the key highlights of the virtual forum. Researchers and participants were encouraged to engage relevant stakeholders through focus groups, advisory groups, co-design processes, network building, co-production, outreach, and training and development, to mention a few.



Now, one might be thinking, “What research method or methodology translates to SER?”

Essentially, transdisciplinarity is at the core of socially engaged research, regardless of whether a researcher identifies as a qualitative, quantitative or mixed-method researcher. Encouraging ECRs to integrate transdisciplinary approaches is evident through collaborative efforts among various disciplines as well as engagement with non-academic stakeholders, incorporating diverse perspectives to create solutions.

We conclude that the combination of the following expectations could serve as indicators of SER:

- Active involvement of quadruple helix stakeholders across all/relevant research phases;
- Mutual and diverse benefits for all parties involved in the research;
- Ethical concerns and considerations are essential to uphold the integrity, trustworthiness, and social responsibility of SER;
- “Action-oriented outcome” element involving a participatory approach that aims to address and solve real-world societal issues.
- Transparency, clear communication, open processes, and data accessibility among research stakeholders;
- Trust-based partnerships where the expertise and perspectives of both researchers and other quadruple helix stakeholders are valued equally;
- Shared-power elements among research stakeholders, such as collaborative decision-making, co-ownership, and empowerment to act.

Over 60 participants, including early career researchers, undergraduates, master’s and PhD students, were profoundly inspired and empowered through the online forum.

They gained essential insights and practical strategies for implementing socially engaged research approaches in their work.





On the first day, it became particularly clear that socially engaged research involves both different disciplines and various interest groups to gain a great variety of perspectives on a real-life problem. This requires scientists to have both communicative and organizational skills.

The second day focused more on the exchange and discussion of the participants' own topics, particularly during the Reverse Methodology and Barcamp sessions. A board game was used to learn more about the necessities and mechanisms of cooperation between different stakeholder groups. The topic of ecosystem disservices was discussed as a special challenge, requiring the consideration and balancing of different groups' interests. Finally, the Scientific Atelier was once again focused on communication, specifically addressing false "social truths." The various sessions clearly highlighted the need for discussion and knowledge among the Early Career Researchers, who rated their understanding of SER as rather weak.

The BETTER Life Spring School, mainly aimed at Early Career Researchers (ECR) in the Life Sciences, took place in virtual form on April 9 and 10. It was designed by all project partners and organized by the MLU team.

More than 60 participants from seven countries attended the first day, which focused on knowledge transfer. The participants' main expectations were to understand the still relatively little-known concept and possible applications of socially engaged research (SER) to generate new research ideas and bring together stakeholders such as society and business in the research.

The Spring School met these expectations by introducing the concept of socially engaged research, analyzing and describing its challenges, as well as presenting relevant methods and tools. Aleksandra Ziemińska-Buczyńska, as an external speaker, gave an informative and exciting presentation on the topic of science communication.

As part of the Spring School, the BETTER Life team tested some of the developed tools with the participants. This is important for the project to adapt the tools to the needs of the ECRs.

The positive feedback from the participants shows the BETTER Life team that, in addition to theoretical input, the sessions focusing on practical applications are particularly important and of interest. A virtual format, as tested by the BETTER Life team, can be a good way to achieve this. It is important to focus on the interests and topics of the participants during the preparation phase. In advance of such a virtual format, participants should be asked about their interests and contributions.

Following joint reflection on the Spring School by the BETTER Life team, we will consider repeating the format of a virtual Spring School in 2025.

# Exploring Ecosystem Disservices: The BETTER Life Toolkit's Expansion Across Europe

The BETTER Life Toolkit no.1 “Supporting Interaction of Community, Science, and Governance” developed by the team of Estonian University of Life Sciences is being tested in other national contexts as well. At the core of the tool is the concept of ecosystem disservices (EDS), i.e. undesirable properties and impacts of ecosystems. The underlying assumption of the concept and its applications is that the citizens have at least the same, if not stronger feeling about the annoying aspects of wild nature than about the beneficial ones. Therefore, it is important to identify and manage EDS in order to ensure the survival of urban nature and the delivery of ecosystem services for healthy and resilient urban environments.



We used the EDS concept to develop a tool for city governance and to ensure the involvement of citizens to decision-making. We have constructed a decision-making tree for supporting management and planning decisions involving urban nature, and tested this tree through individual and group consultation events with representatives of various stakeholder groups. Our testing ground has been North-East Europe; however, in order to ensure the application of the tool outside this region, we also visited project partners in Italy to identify and analyse case studies in their country.



On March 18-20, 2024 a BetterLife team from the Estonian University of Life Sciences (EMU), including Anton Shkaruba and Siiri Külm, visited the University of Camerino (UNICAM). The purposes of the visit were to identify case studies for piloting the BETTER Life Toolkit no.1 “Supporting Interaction of Community, Science, and Governance”, and to work on a joint paper presenting and discussing the toolkit and its applications across Europe.

Camerino is situated in the region of Marche, close to Umbria. Its medieval core was heavily damaged by earthquake strikes in 2016, with most of historical buildings still waiting to be renovated and made suitable for living.

One of the case studies for deploying the toolkit was chosen right next to this area: we will explore how the ecosystem disservices (EDS) framework used in the toolkit can help manage the vegetation on the slopes below the city walls.

Another case will be taken from the different part of the Marche region: the natural parc Sentina at the mouth of the River Tronto and on the periphery of the harbor city San Benedetto del Tronto will be studied to understand how ecosystem disservices have been managed, and how communication and management tools have worked to achieve understanding with local communities. The visit also included a trip to the city of Perugia in Umbria and its peripheries. It yielded one more case study idea: the green areas of Perugia are connected to Natura2000 sites, and this provides access to undesirable wildlife, such as wild boars, to the city core.

The toolkit and its EDS framework will be deployed to find a compromise between biodiversity conservation objectives and wellbeing of citizens. These new case studies will enhance the BetterLife toolkit description and will be discussed in a paper jointly developed by the EMU and UNICAM teams.





# From BETTER Life the opportunity to foster the Mentorship programme at the University of Camerino

In recent years, the University of Camerino (UNICAM) has seen a growing awareness of the importance of creating a mentorship programme in order to support its students and young researchers. Several efforts have been conducted over time by the Quality and Human Resources Presidium in collaboration with the UNICAM Doctoral School.

Questionnaires, meetings, and some institutional steps were taken. The Mentorship programme designed within the BETTER Life project represented a new incentive for the realization of the university programme.

The institutional network can take into account some of the points of reflection that have risen from several BETTER Life think tank sessions, comparing and matching the different worlds and visions of Quadruple Helix representatives (University, Industry, Government, Society). Overall, 24 people were engaged in three different sessions: the first, trying to define the concept of mentoring, also illustrating the potential benefits it could bring to the University of Camerino, and understanding the role of the mentors and the mentees; the second, identifying potential mentors, delineating their characteristics and proposing some possible names; the third, summarizing key points and identifying actions to be taken for the mentorship programme.







On the choice of mentors, the Better Life Think Tank agreed upon a list of candidates mostly coming from outside of UNICAM (mentors should be sought elsewhere ... no asphyxiation, claustrophobia, boundaries ... go beyond ...), unlike the most traditional way of conducting and implementing a mentoring programme within universities.

A crucial aspect for the success and sustainability of the programme is to establish a systemic and synergistic network of people based on reciprocal trust and understanding following the lines of the EU goals on “sustainability, social equity, support for motivation, removal of discomfort or blockages”.

In our case, mentoring is not only a support to young researchers in career development, but also an opportunity to develop their research towards social impact and community benefit. In this sense, interpersonal skills are crucial because researchers need to grasp the sense of what they are doing from outside sources. The relationship between mentors and mentees can help open up avenues of research that is yet to be explored.

It was determined that the UNICAM - BETTER Life Mentorship Programme will have its strength not in the exclusive one-to-one trust relationship between mentor and mentee, but rather on the possibility for mentees to have at their disposal a plethora of mentors. Some of the mentors can be more focused on the humanistic, philosophical, pedagogical, existential relationship, others other specific themes (e.g., sustainable development, environment, heritage conservation and enhancement, etc.) that will be deemed suitable and transversal to different groups of mentees.

## Five possible types of mentors have been identified:

- well-known personalities who have achieved important milestones in their various fields, such as prominent people (in industry or among public administrators) with a mindset that goes beyond the academic landscape – for these type of mentors a reduced number of meetings (group mentoring) are foreseen;
- “more approachable” people, who are still experienced and are able to bring extra value in terms of leadership, cross-cutting experience in different fields, and are able invest time on the Mentorship activities;
- people with very different profiles that are young, who can be inspirational while reassuring that anything can be done, and who may have recently faced the same difficulties as the mentees (which is also important for personal support) – people from other universities too;
- public administration representatives (e.g., Marche Region), to create integration between territorial development policies and Early Career Researchers, which would also add value in terms of effectiveness;
- experienced communicators / journalists, who can develop communication and interpersonal skills.

In order to pair mentors and mentees, an effective approach could be to assign specific keywords to each mentor to delineate the fields that each mentor is able to cover, and to be able to orient mentees in a better way. The mentees will have the opportunity to seek advice from mentors. Additionally, questionnaires will be prepared for mentees, which will improve the process of matching. The matching process will be gradual and progressive.

BETTER Life succeeded in accelerating and strengthening the project at the University of Camerino, which needed to be relaunched. A possible pilot could be tested in the academic year of 2024/2025.







## Creating a Synergy Map for BETTER Life: Fostering Collaborative Research Excellence





The "Bringing Excellence to Transformative Engaged Research in Life Sciences through Integrated Digital Centres" (BETTER Life) project, funded by the European Commission under the Horizon Europe programme aims to revolutionize research engagement in the life sciences. Running from 2022 to 2025, BETTER Life's core mission is to establish the EU Digital Centre of Excellence for Socially Engaged Research in Life Sciences by providing crucial support for early career researchers (ECRs). The key strategy for achieving this mission is to create a Synergy Map that fosters collaboration between BETTER Life and other relevant projects by enhancing research impact and innovation.

## Steps to Create the BETTER Life Synergy Map

- Identify relevant projects.
- Define collaboration objectives.
- Map interconnections and future opportunities.
- Create a visual map.
- Implement and review.

## Benefits of a Synergy Map

- Enhanced Collaboration
- Resource Optimization
- Increased Impact
- Identification of Potential Future Opportunities

## What is a Synergy Map?

A Synergy Map is a strategic tool used to visualize and identify the interconnectedness and collaborative potential between BETTER Life and other related projects. It highlights how these collaborations can enhance capacities, leverage resources and maximize the societal impact of socially engaged research (SER) in life sciences.

Creating a Synergy Map for the BETTER Life project is a strategic approach to fostering collaboration and enhancing the impact of socially engaged research in life sciences. Visualizing and leveraging connections with other projects, BETTER Life can maximize its resources, enhance capacity building for ECRs, and address societal challenges more effectively. BETTER Life will identify future paths to sustain its results and explore new collaboration opportunities. Fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation, BETTER Life and its partners intend to pave the way for groundbreaking advancements in life sciences research, ultimately benefiting the society as a whole.

**Together, we can achieve more and create a brighter, more sustainable future for all.**





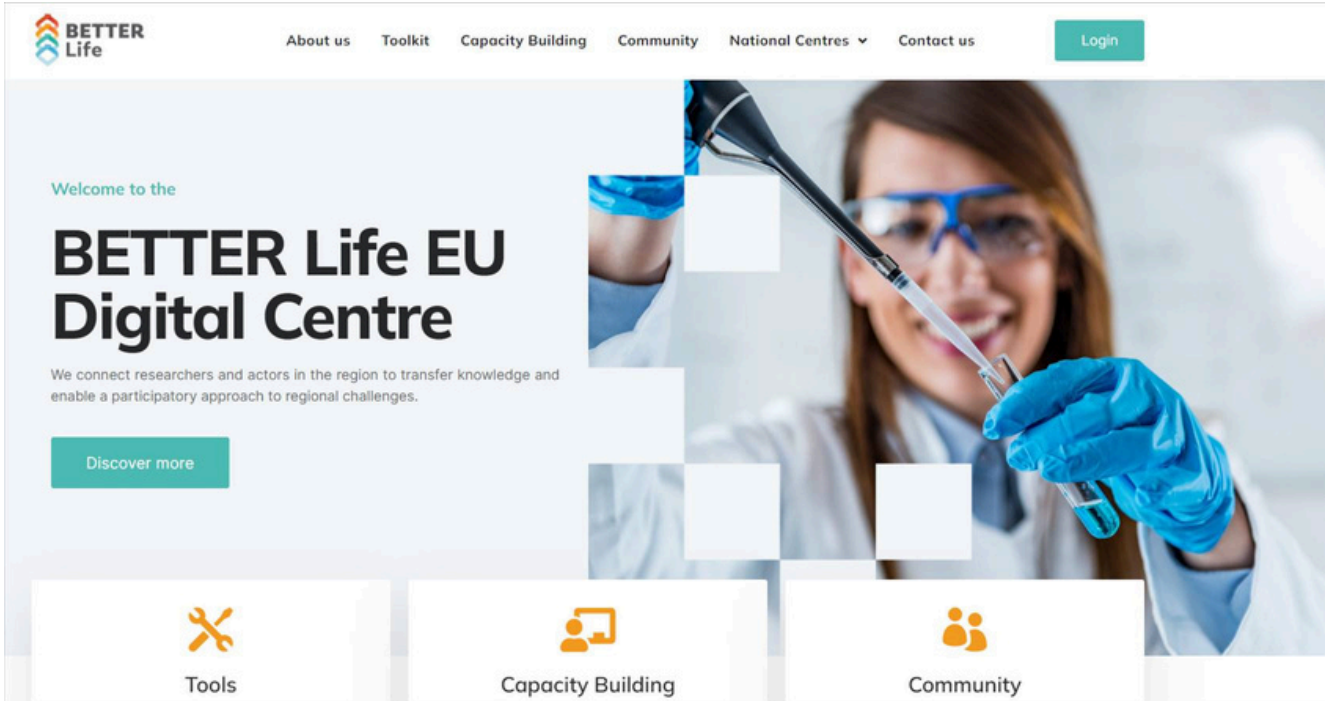
# BETTER Life Annual Meeting 2024

**From May 14 to 16, 2024, the BETTER Life Annual Meeting in Halle, Germany, brought together all consortium members for a vibrant series of discussions, workshops, and networking sessions.**



The Annual Meeting 2024 provided valuable insights and strengthened professional networks. Attendees departed with a revitalized sense of direction and an abundance of fresh connections, eager to translate the shared ideas and strategies into action. Keep connected with the BETTER Life community via our website and social media platforms for continuous updates and avenues to contribute towards shaping the future of BETTER Life.

<https://betterlifehorizon.eu/news/better-life-annual-meeting-2024/>



## BETTER Life EU Digital Centre

The Digital Centre of Excellence (DCoE) functions as an inter-institutional support framework specifically designed to elevate the skills and capabilities of early career researchers (ECRs) involved in socially engaged research. Its primary mission is to assist ECRs in amplifying social engagement within their research endeavours, enabling them to actively address societal challenges across varied regional ecosystems. Comprising a range of resources, the centre incorporates toolkits – comprising diverse tools tailored to support socially engaged research – a capacity-building structure to enhance competencies and skills, and additional features that foster a seamless connection between science and society.

## We drive socially engaged research in life sciences

**BETTER Life strives to enhance and embed Socially Engaged Research among selected Quadruple Helix actors and to promote the concept among Early Career Researchers through the development of new and innovative standards, toolkits and integrated Regional and National Digital Centres.**

**Discover how the Digital Centre of Excellence is shaping the future of socially impactful research, and experience firsthand the transformative potential it holds for early career researchers in the pursuit of addressing pressing societal challenges.**

**Visit the DCoE at [Better Life EU Digital Centre \(better-life-digital.eu\)](https://better-life-digital.eu)**



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