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NEOLAiA

Transforming Regions for an Inclusive Europe

WORK PACKAGE

WP2 Improving teaching and learning

Deliverable D2.1

Report on planning teaching and learning activities

June 2024

WP2	Deliverable D2.1 Report on planning teaching and learning activities
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1. Used terms

BIP - Blended Intensive Program
DMJ - Double, Multiple, Joint (Degrees)
EC - Executive Committee
GA - Grant Agreement
HEI - Higher Education Institution
KPIs - Key Performance Indicators
LMS - Learning Management System
ORU - Örebro University
OU - University of Ostrava
QA - Quality Assurance
SC - Steering Committee
SDG - Sustainable Development Goal
SVK - Šiauliai State University of Applied Sciences
TBC - To be Confirmed
UJA - University of Jaén
UN - United Nations
UNIBI - Bielefeld University
UNIC - University of Nicosia
UNISA - University of Salerno
USV - Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava
UT - University of Tours
WP - Work Package
WP2 - Work Package 2 “Improving Teaching and Learning”
WPD - Work Package Delegate
WPL - Work Package Leader
WPTF - Work Package Task Force
WPTL - Work Package Task Leader

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4. Introduction

NEOLAiA, with its motto 'Transforming Regions for an Inclusive Europe', is an Alliance of nine European Universities cofunded by the European Commission in its 2023 call for the period 2024-2027. The aim of NEOLAiA is to transform regional connectivity by embracing (i) digital transformation, through (ii) inclusion and diversity in a context of (iii) enhanced mobility, which are the three pillars of the project. To achieve this end, "NEOLAiA, Transforming Regions for an Inclusive Europe" is based on ten lines of action:

WP1 Project Management.

WP2 Improving Teaching and Learning

WP3 Diversity and inclusion - Overcoming barriers to participation

WP4 Enhanced Mobility

WP5 Increasing Regional Research Impact

WP6 Entrepreneurship - NEOLAiA Capabilities for the society of tomorrow

WP7 Towards a multilingual and intercultural European university

WP8 Adopting and Sustaining Open Science

WP9 Digital Transformation

WP10 Sustainability and dissemination

The NEOLAiA Alliance consists of nine partners: University of Jaén, Örebro University, Bielefeld University, University of Ostrava, University of Nicosia, Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava, University of Tours, University of Salerno and Šiauliai State University of Applied Sciences.

The aim of WP2 "Improving Teaching and Learning" is, as stated in NEOLAiA's Grant Agreement (GA), to fulfil one of the NEOLAiA's three Higher Education Institution (HEI) core missions: Teaching, Research and Societal Engagement and contribute to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) "Quality Education" to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". Moreover, WP2 will contribute to two of the European Council's recommendations for a "European space of learning which benefits all learners, academics and other education staff who can move freely to study and work across the EU" and "contribute to the vitality of [our] regions and communities, helping to overcome disadvantage

and geographic disparities” (Proposal for a Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation COM/2022/17 final, pp. 1 and 8).

The specific objectives of this WP are:

- Foster a sense of European identity and cooperation in HEIs for a common economic and societal development strongly rooted in a regional perspective by creating joint collaboration structures that promote institutional cooperation in teaching and learning (**Task 2.1 NEOLAIa Pedagogical Hub**)
- Facilitate international mobility and learner-centred teaching and learning by setting up short courses (**Task 2.2 NEOLAIa Focus Academy and Task 2.4 NEOLAIa Summer Schools**) and multiple or joint degrees (**Task 2.3 NEOLAIa joint degrees**)
- Reach out to the society and strengthen the European dimension in higher education and research (European Strategy for Higher Education) by creating and promoting inclusive and barrier-free digital resources (**Task 2.5 NEOTeAch**)
- Promote and instil a mind-set for lifelong learning in its regional communities aimed at future-proof and market-oriented employability by deploying micro-credentials and certification (**Task 2.6 NEOLAIa Micro-credentials and Digital Badges for Lifelong Learning**)

The main objectives and the task responsibilities are summarised in Figure 1.

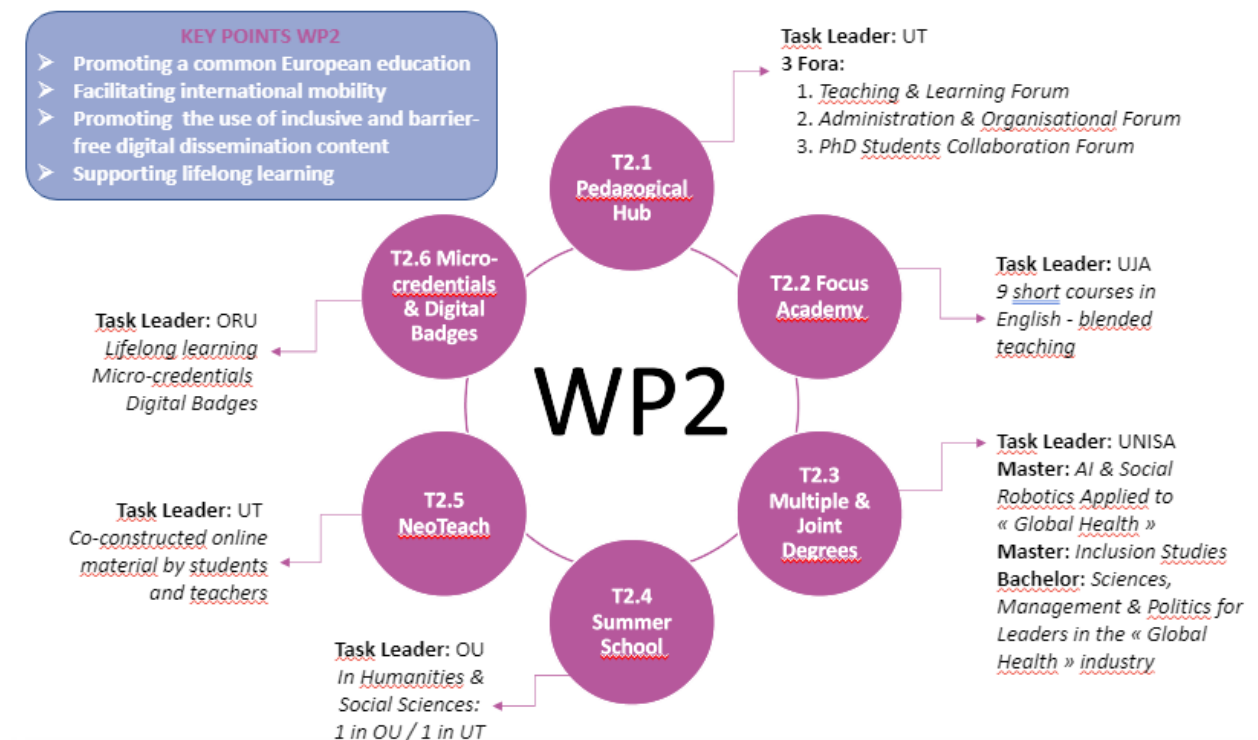


Figure 1: Summary of the main objectives and task responsibilities for WP2.

By achieving these objectives, we aim to create a community of European citizens who are politically, economically and scientifically committed and fully capable of participating in their society and economy.

5. Executive summary/abstract

This first report on the WP2 “Teaching and Learning” provides information about the main goals of each task, planning of activities, potential issues and ways to solve them, Key Performance Indicators and target values. Moreover, it includes the Quality Assurance (QA) we are implementing for this WP.

During the project, three WP2 deliverables will be provided and this report is the first one. Table 1 below summarises the description of the three deliverables.

Table 1: Description of the three deliverables

Deliverable Number	Deliverable Name	Description	Due Month
D2.1	Report on planning teaching and learning activities	Planning of activities to be performed within the educational realm, including Pedagogical Hub, NEOLAIa Focus Academy, NEOLAIa degrees, Summer Schools, NEOTeAch, NEOLAIa Micro-credentials and Digital Badges. <i>Electronic format English (30 P.)</i>	M6
D2.2	Intermediate Report on setting up teaching and learning activities	Detailed description of activities conducted as part of the Pedagogical Hub: NEOLAIa Focus Academy, NEOLAIa degrees, Summer Schools, NEOTeAch, NEOLAIa Micro-credentials and Digital Badges. <i>Electronic format English (30 P.)</i>	M24
D2.3	Final report on setting up teaching and learning activities	Detailed description of activities conducted as part of the Pedagogical Hub: NEOLAIa Focus Academy, NEOLAIa degrees, Summer Schools, NEOTeAch, NEOLAIa Micro-credentials and Digital Badges. <i>Electronic format English (50 P.)</i>	M48

6. WP2 Description

To give everyone involved in WP2 a better understanding of the division of tasks according to the level of involvement of each person, Figure 2 lays out the key terms, as defined by the Consortium Agreement (CA). In addition, one task card per task will describe the main objectives of the task and the role of each key player. The roles and responsibilities of each group of people involved in each task will be identified and described on the task card. The task cards will be made available in the Microsoft Teams space available for all the WP2 members. A template of the task card can be found in Annex 1.



WP POSITION	MISSION
WP Leader (WPL)	Coordinating the WP Responsible for the WP
WP Task Leader (WPTL)	Coordinating the task Responsible for its task
WP Delegate (WPD)	Responsible for implementing and coordinating the WP in its university, Forwarding informations from WPL & WPTL
WP Task Force (WPTF)	Working for the task in its university, including experts and collaborators

Figure 2: Terminology for the different levels of involvement of people in WP2. This figure explains the role of each person and the interactions between the different groups of people.

Since the NEOLAiA kick-off meeting in February 2024, WP2 WPL, WPTL and WPD have met once a month. Additional meetings have been organised for each task and WPTF are invited depending on the agenda of the meetings. The WPTF for each task has been set up in each university and delegates have been identified. Their role is to pass on information to their university community and participate in the successful implementation of WP2 activities. Once identified, the WPTF was able to interact directly with the WPTL for a more efficient collaboration.

We have planned the face-to-face meetings throughout the duration of the project and all the scheduled meetings are listed below in Table 2. To enable as many participants as possible, we always organise these meetings in hybrid mode. We also plan meetings at the various universities in the alliance, concentrating mainly on the universities who are task leaders. We also chose the location of the meetings according to the schedule of other NEOLAiA activities to avoid time-consuming travel and overlapping activities.

Table 2: Schedule of face-to-face meetings during the funding period.

Meeting	Year	Time of year	Host university -Country
N°1	2024	June, 12-13	University of Tours UT - France
N°2	2024	December, 11-12	University of Salerno UNISA - Italy
N°3	2025	Beginning of June	Ostrava University OU - Czech Republic
N°4	2025	November or December	University of Jaén UJA - Spain
N°5	2026	May or June	Örebro University ORU - Sweden
N°6	2026	November or December	Bielefeld University UNIBI - Germany
N°7	2027	June	University of Tours UT - France
N°8	2027	November or December	Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava USV– Romania (to be confirmed - TBC)

For the submission of this deliverable, we proceeded in a collaborative manner, with each task leader providing a report on the progress of their task. The WP2 leaders then compiled the information into a single document, which was then subjected to various internal and external evaluation processes, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Timetable for drafting and proofreading the deliverable.

Phase #	Time frame	Tasks to be done	By who
Phase 1	April 2 nd to 25 th 2024	Short report (4p)/task Introduction, Goals	Task leaders WP2 leaders
Phase 2	April 29 th to May 03 rd 2024	Compiling and formatting documents	WP2 leaders
Phase 3	May 6 th to May 10 th 2024	Review by the WP2 Task leaders and delegates	WP2 leaders WP2 delegates
Phase 4	May 13 th to May 17 th 2024	Review by 2 other WP leaders or internal reviewers	Review committee
Phase 5	May 21 st to May 27 th 2024	Modifications/ improvements	Task leaders WP2 leaders
Phase 6	May 28 th to June 7 th 2024	Review by the EC	EC members
Phase 7	June 17 th to June 25 th 2024	Oral presentation to the SC Last revisions by the SC and submission to UJA	WP2 Leaders SC members and WP2 leaders

6.1 Task 2.1 Launching the NEOLAIa Pedagogical Hub

➤ Task aim

The aim of the task 2.1 “Launching the NEOLAIa Pedagogical Hub” is to create structures that promote institutional cooperation in teaching and learning. This will strengthen European identity and cooperation in HEIs for a common economic and societal development strongly rooted in a regional perspective.

The Pedagogical Hub will serve the purpose of reducing existing administrative barriers and obstacles to pedagogy in order to achieve optimal development of NEOLAIa degrees and courses as well as PhD mobility and opportunities. It will provide a common digital platform shared by all the NEOLAIa partners for pedagogical activities, blending synchronous and asynchronous participation formats.

➤ Pedagogical Hub objectives

The general objectives of the Pedagogical Hub are multiple:

- **Educational objectives:** provide access to a variety of educational resources to different target groups (NEOLAIa teachers, staff and students) and provide an interactive learning environment conducive to discussion, collaboration and critical reflection; promote education in European values.
- **Teaching and pedagogical objectives:** promote a learner-centred approach; develop innovative, learner-centred learning methods; create an inclusive environment in response to the diverse needs of NEOLAIa’s stakeholders (NEOLAIa teachers, researchers, staff and students); develop transversal skills and peer to peer teaching; encourage autonomy and responsibility; facilitate access to lifelong learning opportunities.
- **Learning objectives:** acquire knowledge in specific domains through specialized courses and resources (based on the three NEOLAIa pillars); develop and improve practical and technical skills through interactive activities; improve understanding and retention of concepts through varied learning methods such as creation of videos, podcasts, use of serious games and simulations.
- **Administrative objectives:** facilitate communication and coordination between universities on jointly delivered degree programmes; share information on European higher education regulations such as accreditation procedures; facilitate the management of mobility for teachers and staff involved in Teaching and Learning Centres within NEOLAIa; share administrative practices (student selection and registration, ECTS recognition, quality assurance for teaching activities, etc.).

➤ Pedagogical Hub structure

The Pedagogical Hub will blend synchronous and asynchronous participation, which will alternate on a regular basis. Synchronous activities will be pursued through remote meetings and remote workshops. Between meetings, the interaction will be asynchronous, in order to facilitate the continuation of the work done in the previous meetings and to highlight new activities that need to be addressed in the following meeting.

The Pedagogical Hub will include three fora:

1. Teaching and learning forum

2. Administrative and organizational forum
3. PhD student collaboration forum

Each NEOLAIa partner will appoint a forum coordinator who will nominate representatives to the fora (at least one academic staff member, one administrative staff member, one student). The Pedagogical Hub is the platform where discussions regarding teaching and learning will take place in NEOLAIa and the resources corresponding to the WP2 activities will be implemented in this platform. However, depending on the university organising a Teaching and learning activity, other platforms to host the pedagogical contents related to this activity could be used.

➤ Fora descriptions

❖ **Teaching and Learning Forum:**

This forum will provide a platform for organising workshops and discussing pedagogical issues that arise from everyday practice, resulting in a collaborative space where NEOLAIa university stakeholders (students, researchers, teachers and staff) can address obstacles and share best practices in pedagogy. The topics will include pedagogical methods (e.g. inclusive learning – see WP3; active learning methodology – see T2.5 NEOTeAch, project teaching or gamification of teaching and learning), evaluation (e.g. student peer assessment), teacher training, remote learning/teaching support, design and degree quality assessment. Regarding the assessment, a framework will be established within the Forum to evaluate the quality of the NEOLAIa degrees (T2.3 Multiple and Joint degrees) and short programmes (T2.2 - Focus Academy), Summer Schools (T2.4), as well as NEOLAIa micro-credentials and digital badges (T2.6) (See below 7. WP2 Quality Assurance).

Target groups: students, administrative and academic staff from NEOLAIa.

❖ **Administration and Organizational Forum:**

This Forum will be a place where the students, researchers, teachers and staff from NEOLAIa universities will share experiences and discuss solutions to common pedagogical problems, such as degree accreditation, ECTS, harmonisation of structures, academic calendars, securing diplomas and certifications, issuing some of the NEOLAIa certificates in collaboration with WP9 (T9.1), logistics and organizational solutions. The NEOLAIa Digital Passport Platform (T9.1) will be set up in T9.1 and managed through this Forum.

Target groups: students, administrative and academic staff from NEOLAIa.

❖ **PhD Students Collaboration Forum:**

This forum will promote and facilitate mobility and exchange opportunities for PhD students via, among other, research residencies and internships across the alliance, the sharing of offers for supervised research, lab practice opportunities and doctoral school training (WP5 T5.4 NEOLAIa Mentorship Programme and WP4 T4.8 Young Researcher Programme).

Target groups: students, administrative and academic staff from NEOLAIa. This forum will be also public in order to attract PhD students from other universities and to broadly disseminate knowledge.

➤ Digital Tools used and collaboration with other WPs

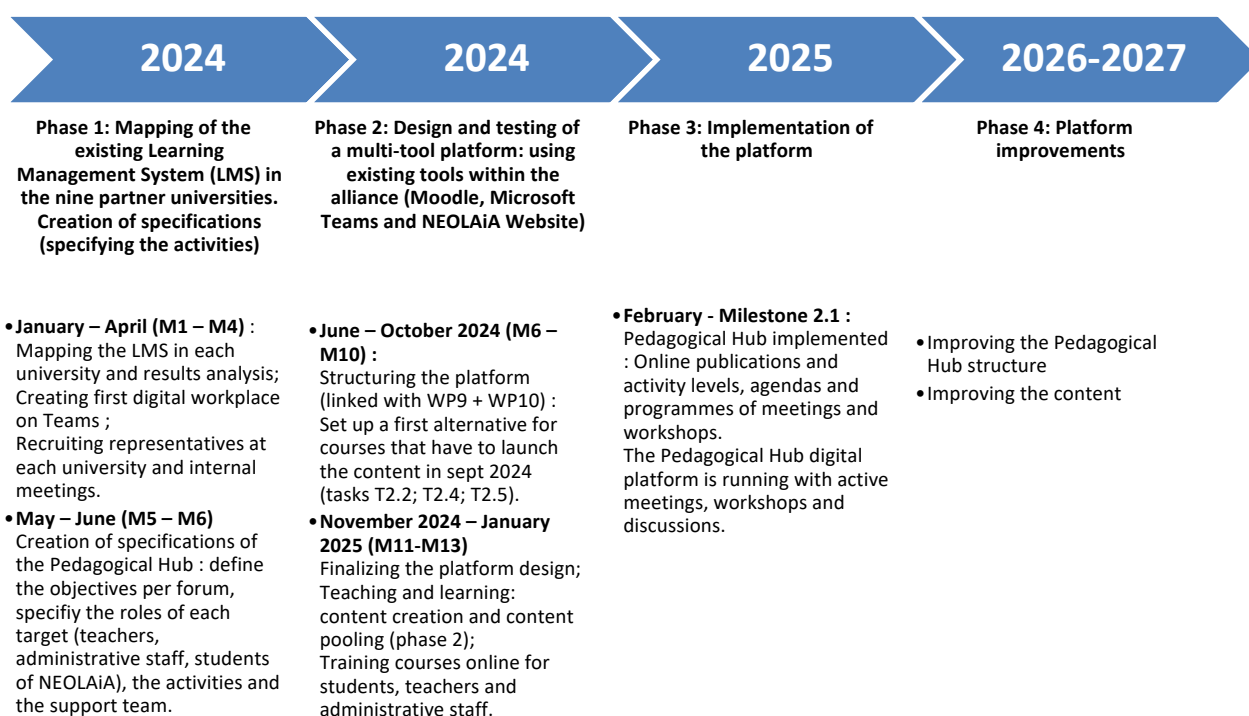
The Pedagogical Hub will be deployed using three different digital tools, depending on the target audience and the types of activities and resources on offer.

First, a Microsoft Teams space is already used by the WPL, WPTL and WPD to chat and work simultaneously on documents. Second, a Moodle platform hosted by the university of Tours will be open to all NEOLAIa teachers, researchers, staff and students through the common identification procedure provided by task 9. 1 (Developing a NEOLAIa Digital Identity). This Moodle platform will be accessible via the NEOLAIa website provided by WP10 (Sustainability and Dissemination), which will also include a dedicated area for making certain educational resources and training available to the public.

The forum dedicated to PhD students will be implemented in close collaboration with WP4 (Enhanced mobility) and WP5 (Increasing Regional Research Impact).

➤ Task planning

Figure 3: a structured overview of the activities planned to complete the T2.1 – Pedagogical Hub along the project horizon with corresponding milestones to track progress and achievements.



6.2 Task 2.2 Piloting and sustaining the NEOLAIa Focus Academy

➤ Task aim

The aim of the NEOLAIa Focus Academy is the development, establishment and operation of a comprehensive and cross-sectional educational programme comprising at least nine short courses centred around the three NEOLAIa Pillars, around European regions as well as addressing global ongoing and emerging challenges.

Through this initiative, the overarching objective is to cultivate a network of talented and regionally-rooted students equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to address contemporary issues and empower them to catalyse positive change within their respective regions and to contribute meaningfully to the broader cohesion of the European Union.

➤ Focus Academy objectives

By creating short, cross-disciplinary courses, this task aims to meet a number of objectives:

- Strengthening of the consortium's identity as a regional and European player
- Promoting student involvement and encouraging the acquisition of skills to meet major European challenges
- Creating and promoting a community of students and researchers capable of understanding and tackling emerging problems in different parts of Europe

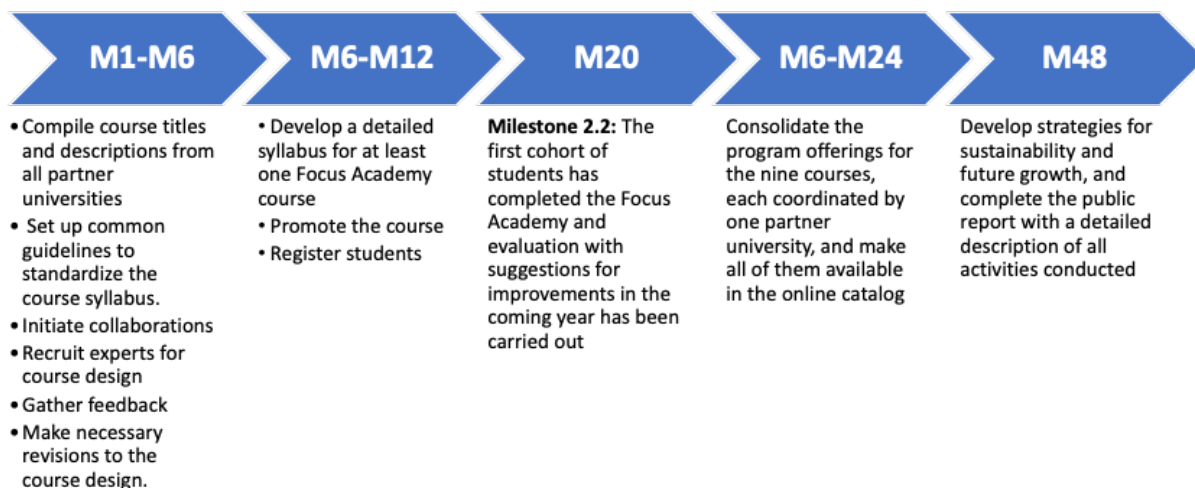
➤ Focus Academy structure

Each course will be coordinated by one of the nine partner universities and at least three partners in total will collaborate on each course. An expert from each collaborating university will contribute to the course design and defining an agreed programme to prepare the materials in conjunction with teachers from NEOLAIa specialised in the topic of each course. Totalling 3 ECTS / 75 hours of student work, the courses will adopt a blended teaching methodology (in line with Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programme), integrating virtual and physical mobility to facilitate a comprehensive learning experience.

These short courses and especially the physical mobility will offer participants invaluable hands-on experiences and opportunities for immersive learning and cultural exchange. The mobility will be eligible for funding through the Erasmus+ programme (KA131 BIP which is an action supporting physical and blended mobility for higher education students and staff from EU Member States) further facilitating student participation and accessibility. Students will be evaluated at the end of each course. In addition, in line with the NEOLAIa quality assurance, we will ask students for feedback, through surveys, on the course content and quality as well as the services provided. Students who successfully complete the course will be awarded three ECTS. The sending universities will then proceed to the recognition by transferring ECTS and/or delivering a Diploma Supplement.

➤ Task planning

Figure 4: a structured overview of the sub-tasks planned to complete the T2.2 - NEOLAiA Focus Academy along the project horizon and with corresponding milestones to track progress and achievements (M1 is equivalent to January 2024 and M48 is equivalent to December 2027).



➤ Comments and current state

An effective collaboration for the development and delivery of each course, offered by the NEOLAiA Focus Academy, is required since at least three partner universities should be involved. We will use Microsoft Teams and the Pedagogical Hub (Task 2.1) to maintain open and ongoing communication with partner universities to identify potential collaboration opportunities, address concerns and ensure alignment with mutual goals and interests. We will also organise networking events where potential partners can connect, exchange ideas and explore opportunities for collaboration. Delegates will also facilitate WPTF identification, introductions and provide support for building partnerships. The identification of WPTFs by the WPDs involves finding people within the university who are experts not only in the educational content but also in the administrative and educational set-up of the short course. Coordinating course development and implementation among multiple partner universities may present logistical challenges due to the diversity between the university organisations, including differences in registration dates, administrative requirements, academic calendars, different starts and endings of the academic year, etc. We will develop comprehensive guidelines, processes and procedures for course organisation and administration. These guidelines will include the student registration timetable to consider the differences in academic calendars for choosing learning activities for the upcoming year (e.g. course start dates, face-to-face session dates and dates for submitting grades). We have decided to remain flexible and open to adaptation concerning for instance the course design, structures that accommodate varying needs and schedules of partner universities. Each participating university is responsible to include these activities in their Erasmus+ KA131 application and to finance their respective outgoing mobilities as well as the organisation of their own Focus Academy course through Erasmus+ KA131.

To ensure that enrolments on the courses are not limited by difficulties in reaching the desired minimum number of students (2-3 per university), we will begin marketing efforts as soon as possible to raise awareness of these courses among target audiences and to attract students.

6.3 Task 2.3 Designing and piloting NEOLAIa multiple and joint degrees

➤ Task aim

Task 2.3 “Designing and piloting NEOLAIa multiple and joint degrees” is related to the creation of international double, multiple or joint degrees (DMJ degrees). Degrees awarded by two universities will be double degrees and by three or more, multiple degrees. Students will spend at least one semester at one or more partner universities. At the end of the study period, the student will receive a diploma from each university in which they studied. The joint degree programmes will be created in mutual collaboration between at least three NEOLAIa universities. Each semester will be implemented by one university. However, professors from all NEOLAIa universities may be involved in the teaching. Each degree programme will be designed considering the skills needed to learn and teach in a global learning environment. The programmes aim to deepen the graduates’ knowledge in their specific field of study, to develop a multicultural attitude and confer advanced skills necessary to meet major European challenges in the three NEOLAIa Pillars (Digital Transformation, Inclusion & Diversity, Enhanced Mobility).

➤ Description and characteristics of the degrees

This task will be a two-step process:

We will first deliver multiple degrees. Students will choose to study at least one semester at one other participating NEOLAIa university and receive a diploma from the sending and receiving universities.

In a second phase, three NEOLAIa joint degree programmes will be implemented.

The three NEOLAIa degree programmes are:

- Artificial Intelligence and Social Robotics Applied to “Global Health” (2 year-Master).
 - 50 expected students per cohort
- Inclusion Studies (2 year-Master).
 - 50 expected students per cohort
- Science, Management and Politics for Leaders in the “Global Health” Industry (3/4 year-Bachelor).
 - 75 expected students per cohort

All NEOLAIa degree programmes will have the following characteristics:

- Research-based learning curriculum - these degree programmes have been chosen due to their high degree of compatibility with the partners’ resources in term of teachers’ competences and research activities.



- Flexibility - the degrees will be organised so that students can choose between two or more tracks. Tracks will be connected to at least two different NEOLAiA partners so that students can select universities and their specialisation tracks before entering the programme.
- Online teaching/learning in addition to a physical mobility of at least one semester. The aim is to offer students a wider choice for the courses.

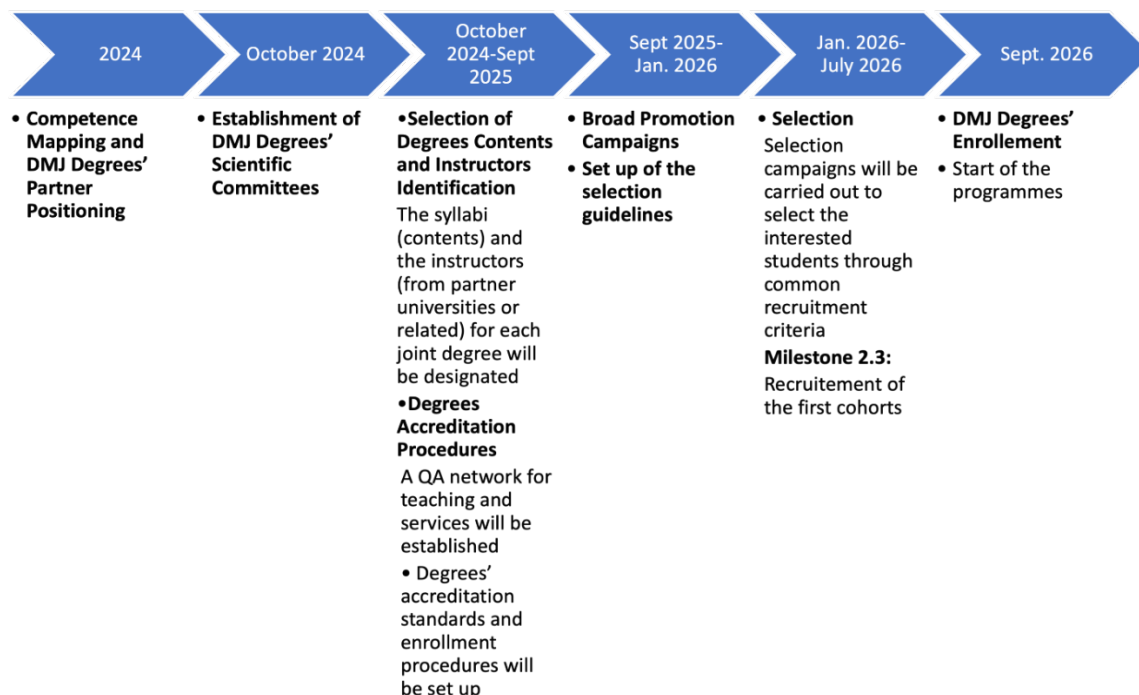
➤ Task planning

A map has been constructed of existing programmes in the nine universities and an analysis of the content of programmes in Europe with content similar to the ones NEOLAiA intends to offer. We will then define the content of the programme to offer the most unique training possible. This will ensure that the programmes offered by NEOLAiA are original and meet clear needs in the private or public sector. Scientific committees will be set up bringing together experts in the topic of the programme from each university, staff involved in curricula implementation, delegates and WPTF. The scientific committees will define more precisely the content of the programmes using the benchmark already carried out, determine the study paths, the learning outcomes, the academic qualifications required and will enrol instructors. Moreover, the committees will carry out the accreditation process and all the administrative procedures necessary for the proper implementation of the programme in accordance with national regulations.

The following activities will be carried out:

- Set up of the scientific committees (Beginning October 2024)
- Scientific committees' discussion (October 2024, online or onsite - location to be specified)
- Regular meetings of the scientific committees (online or onsite)

Figure 5: a structured overview of the sub-tasks planned to complement Task 2.3 throughout the project and corresponding milestones to track progress and achievements.



To increase self-awareness and knowledge about each partner's skills, several mappings have been completed on DMJ degrees and best practice; current and future courses; research centres, labs, observatories, publications. Some of these mappings have been done by other WP such as WP5 "Research". This enabled the partners to understand their strategic priority and to indicate their wish to participate in the most relevant degree(s) through a Call for interest (deadline Mid- May 2024).

A Community of Interest for each degree has been created to improve efficiency and discuss on the critical topics related to the NEOLAiA degree programmes. Since May 2024, several Task 2.3 meetings have been organised to determine the role of each partner within each programme according to partners' strategic priorities. The participants to the Community of Interest in this preliminary phase are the WPD members and the T2.3 WPTL and at least one of the WP2 leaders. Scientific committees in each programme are currently being assembled. After October 2024, the participants will be the members of the Scientific Committees and the WPD will be kept informed on the work under progress. The meetings are based on discussions on specific scientific and administrative issues to identify contextualised solutions.

The following issues have been identified and will be managed by the Scientific Committees for each degree programme.

- Alignment for the accreditation of joint and multiple degrees
- Enrolment criteria

- Financing and sustainability
- Study regulations
- Quality Assurance
- Thesis
- Grading, degrees and course recognition
- Multiple degrees' certificates

6.4 Task 2.4 Designing and piloting the NEOLAIa Summer School in Humanities and Social Science

➤ Task aim

The Summer School programme equips students with competencies that are relevant for their involvement in research and for the constant evolution of the European job market. It will tackle issues such as cultural heritage, nationality perception, media ethics, social inclusion, ecology and ecological transition, as well as mental health concerns. It will employ digital technologies and innovative approaches in both research and the presentation of research results. It will finally include a variety of hands-on activities in international teams, the results of which will be presented in accessible formats, not only among the NEOLAIa universities, but also to the general public in their regions (e.g. via digital interactive maps).

Although NEOLAIa Summer School primarily targets students and teachers within the NEOLAIa alliance universities, it will also be open to students from other higher education institutes, particularly NEOLAIa associated partner universities. A minimum of forty students in total is expected to participate in each of the two summer schools.

➤ Summer school structure

The Summer School will be implemented as a joint venture of NEOLAIa partner universities. It will be held twice during the project period: in 2025 at the University of Ostrava and in 2027 at the University of Tours. The first summer school will focus on heritage, particularly industrial heritage. Although the exact theme of the second summer school has yet to be defined, it will undoubtedly be migration.

During two weeks, the NEOLAIa Summer School will introduce the participants to the latest trends and findings in Humanities and Social Sciences. The NEOLAIa Summer School will be organised in synergy with the NEOLAIa "Open Science" Festival that will be open to the surrounding society of the host university. In this "Open Science" Festival the latest research results will be communicated to the general public, testing any potential ground and interest for citizen science.

❖ NEOLAIa Summer School 2025

The first NEOLAIa Summer School, to be held at the University of Ostrava in June 2025, will focus on digital technologies and digital competences in humanities and social sciences. BIP funding will be used. Four ECTS will be allocated for the students. ECTS could be transferred depending on each university educational system as well

as the calendar for examination sessions. If not, micro-credentials or some other certificate, such as Diploma Supplement could recognise the students' participation in the Summer School.

The umbrella activity envisaged is the creation of interactive maps of NEOLAiA cities with layers of information layers aiming for a comparative monitoring of social, cultural and visual phenomena, e.g. socially excluded localities, vanishing or vanished places and communities and more. The main task is to let digital technologies assist in protecting the memory of places, reconstruct their multi-structured history and reconnect it with the present.

Student teams will gather data in their hometowns and cities, transfer them into interactive maps with Geographic Information System (GIS) software, finalise and present the maps at the Summer School. The course will guide students in collecting data, acquiring digital literacy and provide a wider context of topics and issues in digital humanities and social sciences.

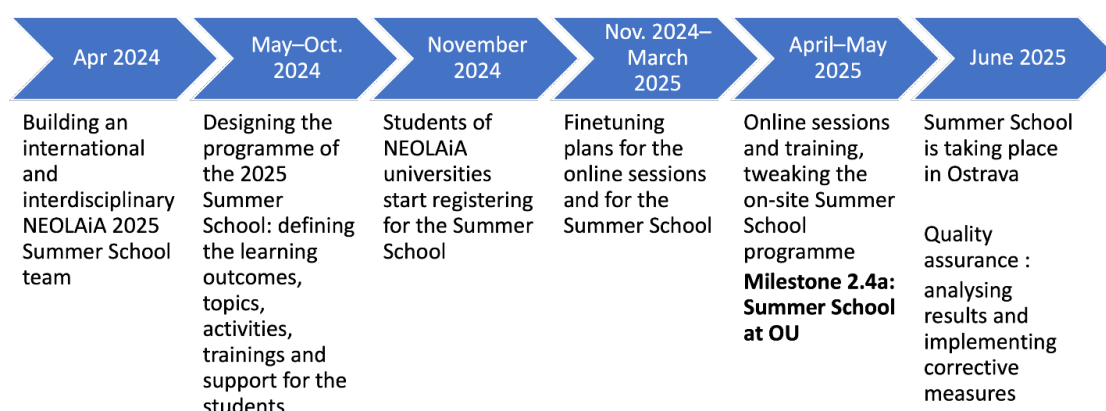
A selection of the Summer School lectures, workshops and research results presentations will be integrated into the Open Science Festival programme which will be open to local communities. The student projects may feed into NEOTeAch and inspire opportunities for citizen science endeavours.

The essentially interdisciplinary content of the School will be shaped and realized by a truly interdisciplinary team of teachers and researchers from five NEOLAiA universities – Ostrava, Tours, Jaén, Örebro and Bielefeld – and from a variety of research fields. The team is already in the making and includes historians and art historians, geographers, a sociologist, a philosopher, a literary scholar, an architect, an economist and communication and media specialists.

To make sure the students get the most out of the joint Summer School programme, they will meet well ahead of the physical meeting during online sessions led by the team of teachers, who will introduce them to the field of digital humanities, train them in the skills essential for working in GIS and guide them on their way to explore places and gather data.

➤ Task planning

Figure 6: a structured overview of the sub-tasks planned to complete the NEOLAiA Summer School. The same strategy will be used for the two Summer Schools





2) availability of the academics for the on-site Summer School programme and availability of the Erasmus+ budget for their mobility. The academics can be present for a part of the on-site programme at least. For instance, they can also take turns/alternate. Discussion and planning therefore need to be done well ahead and the programme needs to be flexible enough to allow for substitutions when/if needed.

➤ **Task aim**

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The implementation of this task is based on the experience already acquired at the University of Tours in the three “Faclabs” (specific places on three different sites dedicated to the multimedia and digital projects of teachers and students <https://newteach.univ-tours.fr>). However, a specific process of selection, construction and dissemination will be designed for NEOLAiA projects.

➤ NEOTeAch objectives

The main objectives of the task are twofold: (1) innovative pedagogy and (2) dissemination.

(1) Innovative pedagogy

- Collaboration of students, teachers and digital or multimedia engineers: students from all levels become actors for their own training by acquiring a field-specific knowledge while directly creating learning content. This is an original way of acquiring skills and validating courses, as it enables students to discuss, design and spread the latest research findings and issues specific to their field to a wider audience. The process of collaboration modifies the relation between students, teachers and university staff, as they all act as co-creators of pedagogic digital resources.
- Additional skills: the development of digital projects provides students with additional benefits, such as allowing them to be trained in project management and to experience group work and acquire organizational and communication skills. During the development of their projects, the students bring their technical knowledge (e.g. photography, video editing, computing) and/or acquire new skills (e.g. desktop publishing, computer-aided design, script writing, multimedia production and post-production, translation of content).
- Pedagogical creativity: on a teacher’s perspective, this is also a stimulating and innovative way of achieving a more active approach towards the students. NEOTeAch calls for in-depth pedagogical reflection on the structure of the course content, as well as the guidance of the students’ creative process and on the overall quality of the materials published.

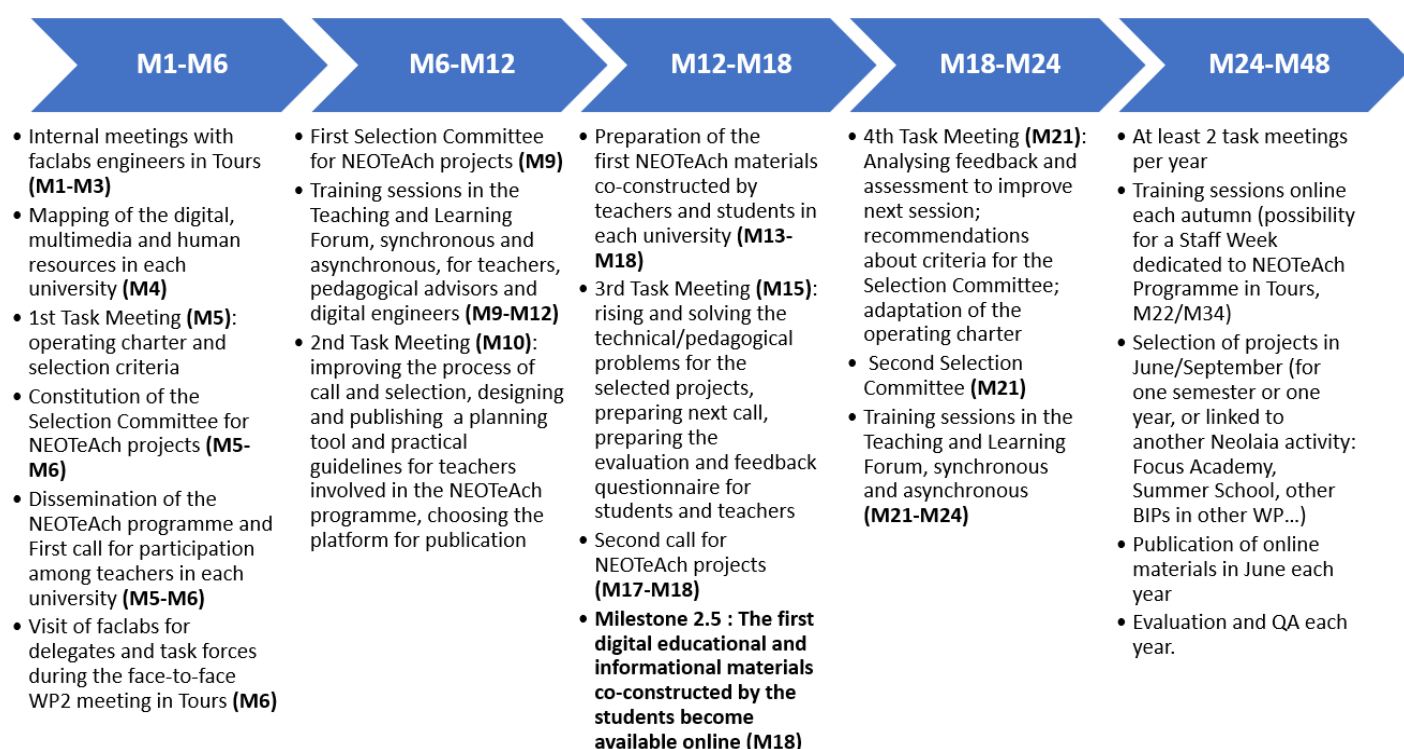
(2) Dissemination

- Open access resources: the NEOTeAch programme aims at promoting the use of inclusive and barrier-free digital dissemination of content. The digital creation then can become a pedagogical resource in itself, not only used in NEOLAiA universities, but by any teacher or student, constituting a part of a common digital heritage. As an outreach tool, these resources are intended to be disseminated to the general public, which also presupposes the relevant choice of an appropriate, open-access platform.
- Bilingual composition: To ensure the best possible dissemination, the teaching materials will be produced in at least two languages (in English and in the local language), whether through instant oral translations, written subtitles, or bilingual versions.

Because of its dissemination, the knowledge sharing and the societal outreach role of the NEOLAIa alliance, this initiative assumes a key transversal approach across the NEOLAIa universities. Not only does it lead to creation and dissemination of content within many fields of study, but it also reinforces NEOLAIa's focus on open science, digital transformation and dissemination (WP8, WP9 and WP10). It is also linked to WP7 because of its plurilingual realisation and to WP3 because it can enable students with fewer mobility opportunities to be included in the NEOLAIa project. Moreover, within WP2, the NEOTeAch programme allows building bridges with other tasks, by being part of the assessment mode for Focus Academy courses (Task 2.2) and for the Summer Schools (Task 2.4) or for other BIPs envisaged within the various WPs.

➤ Task planning

Figure 7: a structured overview of the sub-tasks planned to complete the 2.5 NEOTeAch task



The Selection Committee will be composed of task forces of each university, faclabs' staff and WP leaders at the University of Tours. Its role is first to select and organise the support of the selected projects. Then the Selection Committee will determine which projects will be widely published on the NEOLAIa website or on a platform dedicated to this purpose.

➤ Comments and current state

Among the potential challenges, there are a number of (1) technical, (2) organisational and (3) educational issues to be considered. These need to be solved during the Task meetings by the T2.5 WPTF, by the Selection Committee and by the WPTL (UT), in cooperation with other partners and WPs:

(1) Technical Issues

- Inequalities/Differences within our universities with regards to multimedia engineers and equipment that can be made available to students (cf. Figure 7 Mapping M4). This can be solved by an online technical support provided by UT (or other partners') engineers or by the choice of the podcast format, since a podcast is an easy format to implement with little equipment and also is more accessible for remote assistance. Some funding may be used (to be discussed in each university) to hire a multimedia engineer or to purchase additional digital tools for student use. The aim is to reduce the inequality of access to multimedia tools and digital content creation.

(2) Organisational issues

- Managing the flow of requests for assistance and follow-up and calibrating projects. This is an important point to be discussed before the call for projects during task meetings and then during the work done by the Selection Committee. The more well-defined, planned and scripted the initial projects are, the easier it will be to monitor and support them, whether on-site or remotely. That is why it is important to establish precise guidelines for teachers during the first phase and then improve on them with feedback each year.
- Choosing and building the best platform for the greatest potential for dissemination, in connection with the Pedagogical Hub, but with the criterion of full open access. This needs to be discussed during the task meetings, the WP2 meetings and with WPs 8, 9 and 10, to find the best solutions.

(3) Educational issues

- Evaluating the content produced by the students and selecting the material to be published online. This involves establishing solid and specific criteria, including the degree of commitment to the group work, as well as the quality and scientific accuracy of the final output.
- How can we guarantee the diversity of the fields represented, while at the same time finding a satisfactory and stimulating way of presenting the various productions online? The task meetings should give specific thought, also linked to quality assessment, to this question of promoting and organising the content produced in the online platform. Particular attention must also be paid to the dissemination of the call for projects, in order to reach all universities' departments in line with the NEOLAiA pillar "2. Diversity and Inclusion".

6.6 Task 2.6 Designing and piloting NEOLAIa Micro-credentials and Digital Badges for Lifelong Learning

➤ Task aim

As part of the larger NEOLAIa initiative, Task 2.6, "Designing and piloting NEOLAIa Micro-credentials and Digital Badges for Lifelong Learning," plays a pivotal role in actualising the vision of accessible, inclusive and innovative education. Interwoven with NEOLAIa's mission to foster societal engagement and regional connectivity, Task 2.6 addresses the need for adaptable education pathways and professional development opportunities, particularly in regions outside the metropolitan purview.

Task 2.6 embraces NEOLAIa's distinctive mission by:

- Offering Micro-credentials and Digital Badges as agile tools for validating diverse soft skill activities and learning experiences within the project.
- Aligning short-term educational courses with long-term degree programmes for comprehensive learning trajectories.
- Prioritising the recognition of skills essential for regional development, resilience and preparedness.

➤ Task planning

Figure 8: a structured overview of the sub-tasks planned to complete task 2.6

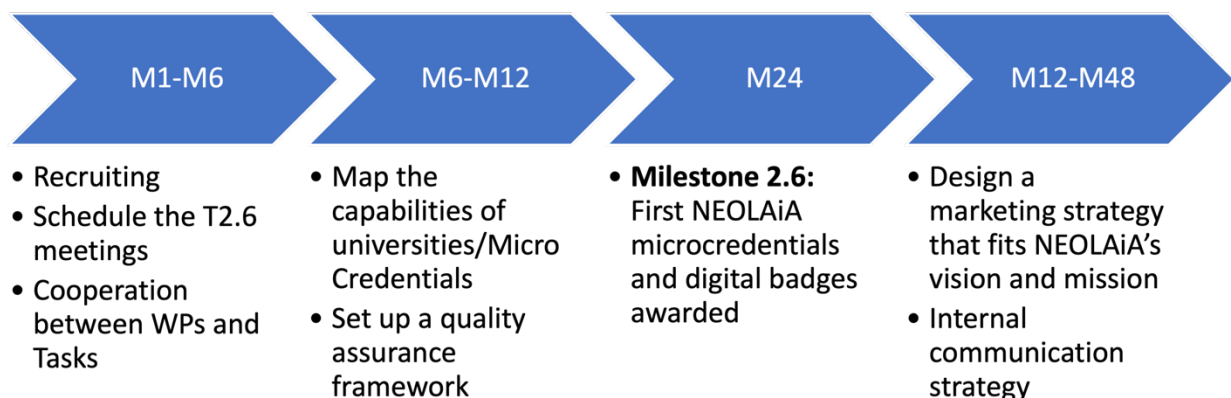


Figure 8: Task 2.6: Implementation plan for NEOLAIa Micro-credentials and Digital badges, 2024-2027.

➤ Comments and current state

The first 6 months have been dedicated to recruiting qualified personnel from all universities to drive the task forward. Task 2.6 is closely linked to other tasks of WP2 (T2.2, T2.4, T2.5) as it will contribute to the recognition of activities carried out. It is also linked to other work packages for the concrete implementation of the micro-credentials and digital badges such as WP9 Task 9.1. We planned an online meeting once a month.

We have decided that the WPTF will have physical meetings (if needed) in conjunction with other physical NEOLAIa activities. We will start mapping partner universities inherent capabilities of offering and establishing of micro-credentials. If we find that the capabilities differ and that some educational systems within the consortium are not able to create micro-credentials, we will explore ways to jointly overcome these obstacles and develop solutions to address this issue.

Finally, before the end of the first year, we will set up a quality assurance framework. We will investigate a feasible way of working together with Task 2.6 members and the people in charge of the NEOLAIa Quality Assurance network who could provide advice.

Awarding Digital Badges to recognise extra-curricular activities, promote job readiness and perpetuate education requires concerted efforts within WP9, particularly in association with the activities of Task 9.1, which is responsible for the development of a "passport platform."

In alignment with NEOLAIa's commitments, Task 2.6 is set to formulate guidelines that guarantee:

- that the Micro-credentials and digital badges are credible and dependable.
- the establishment of quality control procedures to uphold the value of these credentials.

By M24, Task 2.6 reaches a pivotal point with the awarding of the first micro-credentials and digital badges, propelling the task toward its objectives. This milestone underscores a commitment to educational innovation.

Efforts to convey the importance of the newly established credentials will include:

- Raising awareness and promote the advantages of NEOLAIa's new educational pathways.
- Designing a marketing strategy that fits NEOLAIa's vision and mission.
- Develop an internal communication strategy in collaboration with WP1 and WP10 to establish a route for working with Micro-credentials and Digital Badges within the consortium.

Through the execution of Task 2.6, NEOLAIa manifests its dedication to reshaping education via micro-credentials and digital badges. This step is reflective of the broader goal to create a society where ongoing education is not merely a concept but a practical and attainable goal, underpinning NEOLAIa's ethos of inclusivity and educational progress.

WP2 Quality assurance

In collaboration with the NEOLAIa Quality Assurance Network, we will develop different key indicators and measurement methods to assess the implementation of the WP2 main objectives but also the quality of courses and services provided to the students.

Table 4 summarises the qualitative and quantitative key point indicators and our target values for each WP2 task.

Table 4: List of qualitative and quantitative KPIs and target values as indicated in the Grant Agreement (Part B-Technical description)

WP2 List of qualitative and quantitative KPIs	Target value (first 4-year funding timeframe)
Pedagogical Hub set up in digital fora	3 digital fora active (Teaching and learning, Administrative and organizational, PhD student collaboration fora): the Pedagogical Hub is set up and effectively running
Number of Focus Academy courses online	Min. 9 courses implemented
Number of Multiple or Joint degrees running	Min. 3 multiple or joint degrees running
NEOLAIa Summer School in Humanities and Social Sciences	Min. 2 summer schools implemented
Qualitative survey to improve teaching from students and staff	Survey satisfaction rate above 70%
Number of NEOteach programmes launched	Min. 20 NEOteach programmes
Number of Micro-credentials launched	Min. 20 Micro-credentials implemented

Table 5 indicates other indicators and measurement methods that will help the WPL and WPTL to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the NEOLAiA WP2 collaboration over time and for all the teaching activities. Note that adjustments to the indicators and measurement methods can be made based on the evolution of project goals and priorities.

Table 5: Other indicators to evaluate the cooperation within WP2 for Teaching activities

Other Indicators	Measurement
Collaboration effectiveness	Level of collaboration and joint course development among partner universities. The average number of partner universities contributing to joint courses or activity development in courses.
Enrolment rate	Number of students enrolled in WP2-related activities (Focus academy, DMJ degrees, Summer School, NEOTeAch)
Completion rate	Percentage of enrolled students who successfully complete the activities.
Sustainability measures	Existence of sustainability strategies implemented for the long-term implementation of the blended intensive programmes that were developed.

➤ Deliverable writing and editing

To ensure the deliverable quality, the WP leaders, as indicated in Table 3, submitted the report to the WPTL, WPD and evaluation committees according to NEOLAiA's Quality Monitoring Plan.

7. Discussion

➤ Modifications of Milestones

The only deviation from the DoA (Description of the Action in the Grant Agreement), duly accepted by the Steering Committee, is the date of the Milestones for Tasks 2.2 Focus Academy and 2.5 NEOTeAch: for Task 2.2 Focus Academy, the milestone has been moved from Month 14 (February 2025) to Month 20 (August 2025) and for Task 2.5 NEOTeAch the milestone is moved from Month 10 (October 2024) to Month 18 (June 2025). This way, the first cohort of the Focus Academy will attend the courses from January to June 2025, i.e. after the process of recruiting experts, building the syllabus and registering students has been completed during the first year. As for NEOTeAch, the period from January to June 2024 is used to set up the NEOTeAch team, programme and platform; the period from September to December 2024 is used to train teachers, pedagogical advisors and digital engineers and to select the NEOTeAch projects; the period from January to June 2025 is used for the co-construction and publication online of the first educational material.

8. Conclusion

The WP2 members have embarked on a solid and fruitful collaboration to implement the activities of the WP2 and ensure the dissemination to students, teachers, administrative staff and the general public.

The implementation of the different tasks has been planned and human resources have been allocated for WP2 in each university.

We must consider the guidelines provided by WP1 and comply with the national and European legislation. Moreover, WP2 needs to work in close collaboration with other WPs such as WP3 (Diversity and Inclusion), WP4 (Enhanced Mobility), WP5 (Research), WP7 (Plurilingualism), WP9 (Digital Transformation) and WP10 (Sustainability and Dissemination). We keep in mind that the results from WP2 will be widely disseminated. We are going to organise meetings with relevant WP teams and communicate regularly by e-mail with the other WPLs to ensure good collaboration on specific tasks.

In June 2024 at UT, we organised the first face-to-face WP2 meeting since the kick-off meeting in Brussels (February 2024).

9. References

Grant Agreement. Project 101124794 — NEOLAIa. (2023).

Proposal for a Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation COM/2022/17 final. Document 52022DC0017 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022DC0017>)

10. Annexes

Task Card

WPX – XXX

Task X.X - Task name
Description and Objectives
Timetable
MX-MX
Milestones and Deliverables (if applicable)
KPIs and target values
Activities to be performed
Describe the activities to be performed (with a timeline) to successfully complete the task
Complementary and supporting activities (local level)
Follow-up activities
Resources, good practices, tools
Contact person/Task leader: