



RESEARCH & INNOVATION SCOTLAND
Case Study

European Crucible

Members involved: SUPA on behalf of ETP, MASTS, SAGES, ScotCHEM, SICSA, SINAPSE, SRPE, SULSA, Soillse



European Crucible builds on the success of Scottish Crucible which has been supported since 2009 by the Scottish Research Council (SFC) as a leadership programme for ‘future research leaders’ from Scottish Universities and Research Institutes covering all disciplines.

Scottish Crucible is about helping exceptional researchers to see the bigger picture via interactive workshops or ‘Labs’. Crucible is built on the 4 pillars: collaboration, interdisciplinarity, innovation and leadership. The programme helps participants discover skills and identify collaborations likely to make their research more innovative and creative to the benefit of their own careers and society as a whole. <https://scottishcrucible.org.uk/>

Recognising the importance of international research collaboration, Scottish Government provided funding to develop the same methodology to stimulate creative ideas and make new collaborative links between Scottish and European researchers at a time of change in the relationship between the UK and the rest of Europe. This unique bespoke European Crucible is planned and managed by the Scottish Crucible Team at Heriot-Watt University in collaboration with the University of Luxembourg. Originally planned as a face-to-face two-day meeting in Luxembourg in May 2020, European Crucible is going ahead as a series of four Virtual “Labs” in Feb/March 2021.

An outstanding group of 25 early and mid-career researcher leaders from Scottish Universities and Research Institutes were selected from 95 applications representing 12 organisations covering disciplines from the engineering to the humanities. Information on their research interests is available at <https://scottishcrucible.org.uk/european-crucible/scottish-cohort/>.

Virtual Labs, the first facilitated by UKRI Board member Vivienne Parry, brought the Scottish Cohort together in two interactive sessions in Dec 2020. Informative talks, Q&As and discussions included Prof Dame Anne Glover, RSE President, formerly the first Chief Scientific Adviser to the President of the European Commission; Dr Stuart Fancey, SFC Director for Research and Innovation; Prof Rory Duncan, UKRI Director of Talent and Skills; Simon Andrews, Executive Director of Fraunhofer UK Research Ltd.; Prof David Paterson,



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Executive Director of MASTS; and Dr Catherine Dunn, member of SRPE in biological engineering, providing advice on research collaboration with Europe. The Scottish cohort presented their research interests in the form of mini-posters and a virtual networking session (via Gather.Town) allowed one-to-one networking.

A matching number of researchers with similar goals and ambitions from the rest of Europe have been selected following a call via Research Pool networks and other routes. This cohort represents 13 countries with a wide range of specialisms including life, mathematical, computational, physical and environmental sciences, engineering, social geography, languages and culture. Four virtual Labs will bring both cohorts together with the 50 participants tasked with developing new ideas for ambitious pan-European interdisciplinary projects. The Labs and outcomes will be reported on this site as Part 2.

Website: www.scottishcrucible.org.uk/european-crucible/

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