**NTUA Project Goal Summary**

* **Center of Excellence (CoE):**  
   NTUA will coordinate the creation of a **European Center of Excellence (CoE) in Space Geodesy and Earth Observation**, designed to **spread research excellence**, **enhance knowledge transfer**, and **strengthen institutional capacity** among widening countries (Greece, Czech Republic, Turkey, and possibly Slovakia).
* **Balanced European R&I Landscape:**  
   The CoE will help close the gap between widening and non-widening countries, making the **European Research Area (ERA)** more **competitive, balanced, and integrated**.
* **Consortium Composition:**  
   The project brings together a **diverse set of partners**:
  + **Widening:** Universities, SMEs, Research Institutes, Government Bodies (receiving capacity building).
  + **Non-widening:** Leading Research and Technology Organizations (RTOs), advanced universities (providing expertise and mentorship).
* **Governance and Structure:**  
   The CoE will adopt the **management and operational structure** provided by NTUA (Governing Board, Executive Committees, Research and Education Panels, Entrepreneurship Services, AI/Digital units).
  + **Members from each partner institution** will occupy roles in these bodies, ensuring a shared, multi-country governance model.
  + The **central administrative and operational hub** will be based at **NTUA**, as the main beneficiary and long-term host.
* **Implementation through WPs:**  
   The five WPs (Institutional Reforms, Upskilling, Research Excellence, Digital Transformation, Outreach) outline **how the CoE will be developed**, with:
  + Each task distributing responsibilities to different partners.
  + Leadership balanced between widening and non-widening institutions.
  + SMEs and government entities actively involved in innovation and outreach.
* **Sustainability:**  
   After the project, the CoE will:
  + Continue operating as a **permanent hub for excellence** in geodesy and Earth observation.
  + Serve as a **model for replication** in other widening countries.
  + Maintain long-term collaborations with non-widening partners and industry.

### **Partner Roles**

* **Widening countries (Greece, Czech Republic, Turkey, Slovakia):** universities, SMEs, research institutions, and government agencies will benefit from skills transfer and institutional upgrades.
* **Non-widening partners:** provide expertise in staff training, digital tools, and advanced research methods.
* **SMEs:** lead outreach, entrepreneurship training, and ecosystem building.

**WP Description**

* WPX Development of the Governance of the Research Excellence
* **WP1 Institutional Modernization and Reforms:** Lead – NTUA (GR) with strong support from other universities (TUC, UNIWA, Akdeniz) and government stakeholders.
* **WP2 Upskilling of Research, Technical and Management Staff:** Lead – A non- widening partner (e.g. research institution that can transfer knowledge), and other widening or non-widening stakeholders (SMEs or government institutions)
* **WP3 Development of Research Excellence:** Lead – NTUA; collaborate with other widening and non-widening research institutions or universities.
* **WP4 Digital Transformation:** Lead – SME or institution with digital expertise (widening or non-widening); widening universities for implementation.
* **WP5 Outreach:** Lead – Could be Total View (GR) with support of SMEs and government entities from all widening countries.
* WPX DEC Activities
* WPX Project Management

**WP1 – Institutional Modernisation and Reforms (Lead: NTUA)**

**Task 1.1 – CoARA-aligned Research Assessment**  
This task focuses on adopting a modern way to assess research quality, based on the European CoARA principles. It means moving away from judging only publications and citations and instead valuing collaboration, open science, innovation, and societal impact. NTUA will lead this change, but each university and research institute in the project (from Greece, Czech Republic, Turkey) will need to review and update their internal policies. Non-widening partners will support by sharing their best practices.

**Task 1.2 – Establishing a Research Management and Administration (RMA) Office**  
This task is about setting up or strengthening a Research Management and Administration office. This office will help each widening partner manage projects, write better funding proposals, and connect with European and international research networks. NTUA will establish a central model, and each widening university will create or improve its own office. Non-widening partners and SMEs will provide training and digital tools to make these offices efficient.

**Task 1.3 – Creating Interdisciplinary Research Clusters**  
This task will create interdisciplinary research clusters that bring together researchers from different departments and countries to collaborate on common topics such as Earth observation, climate monitoring, and AI applications. NTUA will coordinate, but each widening partner will nominate staff and researchers to join these clusters. Non-widening partners will mentor these clusters and guide them towards international research collaborations.

**WP2 – Upskilling of Research, Technical and Management Staff (Lead: Non-Widening Partner)**

**Task 2.1 – Staff Exchange Program**  
This task will allow researchers, technical experts, and administrators from widening country universities to spend time working with leading European institutions. The goal is to learn advanced techniques, improve project management skills, and build long-term collaborations. Staff from these widening countries will travel for exchanges, while non-widening institutions will host them and provide mentoring and knowledge transfer.

**Task 2.2 – Training in Research Management, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), and Open Science**  
This task will strengthen the ability of staff from the widening countries to prepare successful research proposals, manage projects efficiently, protect intellectual property, and adopt open science practices. Training sessions will be designed and led by experienced non-widening partners with proven expertise. All widening universities, research institutes, and SMEs will take part to build internal capacity for long-term sustainability.

**Task 2.3 – Entrepreneurial and Science Communication Training**  
This task will help researchers and staff from widening country institutions learn how to turn research results into market-ready products, create start-ups, and communicate science effectively to policymakers and the public. SMEs and non-academic partners will lead practical workshops and mentoring sessions. Widening research institutions and universities will take part, gaining skills that will strengthen their innovation ecosystems.

**WP3 – Development of Research Excellence (Lead: NTUA)**

**Task 3.1 – Shared Research Infrastructure**  
This task will connect and make better use of existing research infrastructures such as GNSS networks, data centers, and geodetic observation stations. Partners from the widening countries will share access to their facilities, while leading non-widening institutions will provide guidance on integrating and modernizing these infrastructures. This will allow all partners to access advanced tools and resources for high-quality research.

**Task 3.2 – Joint Research and Innovation Agenda**  
This task will define shared scientific and innovation priorities for the entire consortium. Researchers and experts from all widening countries will work together with non-widening partners to draft a long-term research agenda. This agenda will guide future collaborations, focus on solving European challenges in geodesy and Earth observation, and help widening institutions become more competitive in European research programs.

**Task 3.3 – Seed Projects for Collaborative Research**  
This task will fund small, collaborative pilot projects to test new research ideas. Teams made up of partners from **widening countries** will work closely with leading non-widening institutions to design and carry out these projects. The goal is to help widening countries develop research excellence, publish high-quality results, and create strong partnerships that can later compete for larger EU research grants.

**WP4 – Digital Transformation (Lead: Non-Widening Partner or NTUA)**

**Task 4.1 – AI for Geodesy and Research Management**  
This task will identify and implement artificial intelligence (AI) tools to improve how data is analyzed and how research projects are managed. Experts from non-widening institutions will guide the process, while teams from **widening countries** will learn how to use AI to handle complex satellite data, improve decision-making, and automate administrative tasks.

**Task 4.2 – Digital Infrastructure Upgrade**  
This task will assess and improve the digital systems used by widening partners. It includes upgrading high-performance computing systems, improving cloud-based data storage, and enabling faster and more secure data sharing. Partners from **Widening countries** will receive technical support from leading European institutions to modernize their digital infrastructures and make them more compatible with EU-wide research platforms.

**Task 4.3 – Data Science and Centralized Data Management**  
This task will create a centralized, cloud-based platform for managing GNSS and geospatial data. The system will be designed to comply with FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable), ensuring easy access and sharing among all partners. Researchers from **Widening countries** will be trained to manage and analyze data on this platform, while non-widening partners will contribute expertise in setting up the architecture and maintaining high-quality standards.

**WP5 – Outreach and Innovation Ecosystem Building (Lead: SME or Non-Academic Partner)**

**Task 5.1 – Industry and Regional Innovation Linkages**  
This task will connect the project with regional businesses, startups, and government agencies to create a strong innovation ecosystem. Partners from **Widening countries** will map their local innovation networks and establish formal collaborations with industry players. SMEs and non-academic partners will take the lead in organizing matchmaking events and partnership agreements, helping researchers bring their innovations closer to the market.

**Task 5.2 – Citizen and Policy Engagement**  
This task will actively involve citizens and policymakers in project activities. Public awareness campaigns, citizen science initiatives, and policy workshops will be organized to show the value of space geodesy and Earth observation research. Participants from **Widening countries** will work with communication experts to design materials that make complex scientific results understandable and impactful for society and decision-makers.

**Task 5.3 – Internationalisation and Scientific Visibility**  
This task will boost the international presence of widening countries by creating online repositories for geodetic products, promoting scientific achievements at international conferences, and building partnerships with leading research networks. Researchers and institutions from **Widening countries** will be supported by experienced non-widening partners and SMEs to gain visibility in the European and global research community.