



Marika Antikainen, Sirpa Holmström,
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**COLLABORATION COUNTS:
EXPERIENCES IN INTERNATIONALISATION
FROM HAAGA-HELIA, LAUREA AND
METROPOLIA**

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FOREWORD

Most distinguished reader

3AMK is the strategic alliance created by three major universities of applied sciences in the Helsinki Metropolitan area. Haaga-Helia, Laurea and Metropolia universities of applied sciences (UAS) collaborate in selected areas to have a stronger impact not just in the development of education but also in applied research and industry relations.

3AMK is a mindset, not an organisation. We see the blurry future as an excellent opportunity to make a real difference. We create agile innovations together in multi-disciplinary projects. We make use of what is unique in each of us and, based on our strengths, build solutions in a multitude of areas – for example in learning, RDI, entrepreneurship and the export of education. We utilize artificial intelligence in planning education for the future. Our students are our inspiration – their employability and wellbeing are the key factors in our collaboration.

For the Finnish universities of applied sciences, internationalisation is not an option, but rather an imperative. Haaga-Helia, Laurea and Metropolia share a deep interest in international collaboration. Together our aim is to build new forms of international partnerships in agile networks.

This publication shares not just good practices in international cooperation but also some of the challenges experienced. We hope the articles give inspiration and new insights for anyone working or interested in international higher education. We also hope this publication contributes to creating active and continuous dialogue among higher education worldwide. We are looking forward to connecting with you.

Teemu Kokko Jouni Koski Riitta Konkola
Haaga-Helia UAS Laurea UAS Metropolia UAS



Presidents of 3AMK: Teemu Kokko, Riitta Konkola and Jouni Koski

INTRODUCTION

This publication is a joint effort of staff of Haaga-Helia, Laurea and Metropolia Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland. Haaga-Helia, Laurea and Metropolia underline the importance of internationalisation in higher education which gave the inspiration to create this publication.

In a call of papers the staff and student union members of all three universities were invited to share their knowledge, experience and good practices of cooperation with partners worldwide. Not only success stories were asked for, but also stories about the processes and possible challenges faced or to-be-solved. The target group of the publication are players in the higher education sector in and outside Europe.

We hope that the articles give new insights for anyone working or interested in international higher education and also inspire the readers to develop new forms of cooperation with new and existing partners.

In Finland, the higher education system consists of two sectors: universities of applied sciences and universities. Universities of applied sciences focus on providing education and conducting research, development and innovation activities in cooperation with working life. Studies at UASs are professionally oriented and practical. Universities of applied sciences are also important motors of regional development. This publication includes examples how internationalisation is included and integrated into the core tasks of universities of applied sciences.

The articles of the publication are organised under four themes: Strategy and Partner Networks; Internationalisation through Mobility; Practices Supporting Mobility; International Research & Development and Transnational Education. The articles



under the theme Strategy and Partner Networks focus on the role of two key elements in international co-operation of higher education: staff in higher education institutions and the partner networks.

Under the theme Internationalisation Through Mobility various forms of mobility and the impact of mobility not only for individuals but also for the university community and in regional development are discussed. How to enable mobility and enhance the learning outcomes of mobility are questions discussed in the part Practices Supporting Mobility. Mobility is an important form of internationalisation in UASs, the multitude of articles written about this topic indicates this.

The role of research, development and innovation activities has increased and is increasing in the Finnish UASs. The article from Shoemaking to Creating Ecosystems discusses the mechanisms contributing to project sustainability. Transnational education or education as business is a more recent phenomenon in Finnish higher education. The article When Teachers Become Learners describes an export project where validation of prior learning is a substantial element.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the authors of this publication as well as to Anna Laakkonen and Maija Merimaa from Laurea who helped us to put all the pieces together and created the visual look for this publication. It has been inspiring to work with all of you.

In sunny, autumnal Finland in September 2019

Marika Antikainen, Sirpa Holmström, Arja Majakulma & Tiina Piipponen, Editors



I
STRATEGY AND
PARTNER NETWORKS

Sirpa Holmström & Kaija Lindroth

TRANSLATING INTERNATIONALISATION GOALS INTO ONE'S OWN WORK - HOW DO I DO THAT? CASE HELMI

At Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, everyday operations and development undertakings are understood as a team sport. You share the tactics, the game begins with the whistle, and once the game is over the players come together for a debriefing. For a successful game each player is needed and expected to know her/his role. In a university context, this means that each individual from senior management to teaching and non-teaching staff is needed to achieve the set goals. J.B. Barney, who takes the resource-based perspective on strategic management, states that staff are the most important resource of an organisation. The activities and the implementation of strategic goals play a crucial role and lead to success or failure in the organisation. According to Barney, human capital resources comprise a mix of knowledge development, experience, reflection, intelligence, human relationships as well as the insight of individual managers and workers. (Barney 1991, 101.)

In this article we discuss the question of how to empower staff to deliver internationalisation goals in a university of applied sciences. We relate the discussion to a fictive female teacher whose name is Helmi and explore her personal experiences in putting internationalisation into practice over the course of an academic year. Haaga-Helia uses a modified version of Deming's "Plan-Do-Check-Act" cycle in the management of its activities and quality processes. We use this modified version (Figure 1) as well as the Excellence Model of European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM

Model 2013) as a frame in our discussion. We also refer to the findings of the cross-institutional benchmarking study "The Role of Staff in Internationalisation" we made in cooperation with Dutch partner institution NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences in 2017–2018 (Brandsma-Dieters et al. 2018). In the benchmarking study, both quantitative data as well as interviews and focus group discussions were used to investigate the role of staff in internationalisation, including staff perceptions of institutional strategy, staff competencies as well as the enablers and disablers of international cooperation.



Figure 1. Plan-Do-Check-Learn/Develop cycle of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences.

Game tactics: planning the work

Helmi is preparing for her performance appraisal: "I know that my institution considers international cooperation important and has set goals related to internationalisation. But what does that mean in practice? What could I do to support students to develop their international skills, for example?" Recognising the existence of goals related to internationalisation as part of the institution's overall strategy or as a separate policy paper is a good starting point. However, one cannot expect that such knowledge automatically leads to the successful implementation of goals. The strategy might remain just words on a piece of paper unless staff members are able to translate the goals into their own work. If Helmi cannot find a way to reflect upon her question with colleagues and find answers, she might give up thinking about internationalisation goals. The vision and mission of the institution lead the way but the concrete operationalisation of goals is needed. To achieve results,

communication and advice are recommended, as well as processes that support daily work (Hunter 2018, 17.) When the Why of internationalisation is clearly communicated, Helmi is able to answer the question: “How can I support students in the development of skills needed in an international workplace?”

In Helmi’s workplace, annual operating plans made on the faculty and unit levels as well as face-to-face performance appraisals play an important role in creating a mutual understanding of what needs to be achieved. Helmi and her colleagues are invited to take part in the meetings and discussions where the action plan for the upcoming year is being discussed. This is followed by a performance appraisal where Helmi and her supervisor discuss annual goals and what is expected from Helmi. They also reflect upon Helmi’s competence profile and discuss how she could develop herself to best be able to do her work.

Helmi and her supervisor agree that two of the courses Helmi is teaching will be made available for incoming exchange students. Helmi will also go on a one-week teacher exchange to Spain. Since she does not have much experience in teaching international student groups they reflect on how she could develop her skills. They agree that Helmi will attend the class “Teaching multicultural student groups.” Helmi’s supervisor also encourages her to discuss with more experienced colleagues. Together they come up with an idea to call a meeting where lecturers working with international groups and those interested in working with international students get together for a talk. The supervisor’s role is crucial: middle managers can support and encourage sharing and creating best practices.

Let the game begin: Doing

Very little is written about the competencies required by staff working in internationalised higher education institutions. A wide portfolio of activities comprises the internationalisation of the curriculum: teaching and advising international students, developing partnerships, international marketing and recruitment, designing services for internationals as well as research and development with international partners. This sets many requirements for staff. Intercultural competence, English language proficiency, networking skills as well as didactic and research competence in an international context belong to the set of competencies staff report when asked about skills needed in internationalisation. (Engel et al. 2015, 85.)

In the focus group discussions carried out at Haaga-Helia and NHL Stenden (benchmarking at Stenden, merger NHL Stenden 1.1.2018) as part of the cross-institutional benchmarking, it came out that staff members regardless of their role or position in the organisation all shared the view that open-mindedness and intercultural skills are needed for successful internationalisation. Other skills listed were more dependent on and related to the respondent’s role and tasks. As Helmi reflects upon her competencies in the performance appraisal, she identifies that she needs to further develop her intercultural competence and didactic skills in an international context.

Goal area and results

Organisational processes help us organise our work and identify our own role within the organisation’s daily activities. At Haaga-Helia, operational results are evaluated by means of three categories based on the EFQM Model: people results, student results, and societal impact.

Operational results invite the organisation and individual employees to keep abreast of indicators on strategy implementation. Staff members reflect upon their own understanding of their respective roles in internationalisation as well as the results of their actions. At Helmi’s institution, performance appraisals take place once a year at the beginning of the calendar year, in some cases to be followed by a mini-appraisal in the autumn. It is time for Helmi to stop and think about her own role and actions over the past year: “Did I meet the goals set the year before? Did I gain new insights and develop my competencies to be able to enhance my role? Did I add value to students and my employer?” In addition, employees can express their opinions and experiences with regard to all strategic operations via the climate surveys and mood checks that are carried out regularly. They reflect upon how the supervisors supported them at work, and how they developed their competencies. The resources provided also play an important role, and Helmi is happy that her teaching exchange was included in her annual work plan and time was allocated for that purpose.

In a higher education, priority is on student success. In an ideal situation, supervisors see to it that communication with students is continuous and open so that the impacts of activities undertaken in daily work can be assessed as they take place. On top of that, staff members can gain insights on the impact of their work through various feedback channels: course feedback, student surveys and the feedback given by graduating students. In the graduation survey, students comment on the general international dimension of their studies (Haaga-Helia 2017, 5.22/7), the diversity of the learning environment and language studies.

Inspiring staff members with an international mindset encourage students to study and complete their work placement abroad, to participate in international events both on campus and outside, to engage in international networks and to work abroad both during and after their studies. The role of an individual staff member can be decisive in the choices that students make and staff member networks can contribute significantly to a student’s opportunities to find employment. Helmi can still recall the feedback of the students who sent her a message from their combined exchange and work placement in Mexico: “Thank you so much, Helmi, for encouraging us and convincing us that we can manage out here. We are outside Europe for the first time in our lives and we are doing fine!” Helmi cannot stop thinking: “If only I had had all these opportunities when I was a student.” She worked in the local store most summers and studied in the nearest university like many of her friends.

To identify societal impact, Helmi may need to take a longer perspective. In today's society, job opportunities are global and graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills needed in global work environments contribute to a diversified Finnish economy. Helmi likes to stay in contact with her former students to learn about their careers and she also follows the feedback collected from the vast Haaga-Helia alumni population. Through such feedback it is possible to observe the career development of alumni and this information helps Helmi's institution to position itself in the competition.

Debriefing: learning and developing

A year has passed, and it is time for reflection and analysis. "How did I do? Who would be interested in hearing what I learned? How could I share my thoughts with colleagues?" Helmi is preoccupied with these questions. Self-evaluation is important, but it would also be fruitful to sit down with colleagues to hear what each one has achieved in terms of internationalisation. Who went where, met with whom, achieved and learned what? What enabled Helmi to undertake the planned activities? Unit meetings, programme meetings, team meetings and development days are forums where mutual reflection and sharing can take place. In one of the team meetings, Helmi shared a proposal she got from a Spanish colleague she met during her teacher exchange. The colleague had suggested that his students in Spain find a business company in Spain with an interest in the Finnish market and with the help of Helmi and her students they work out an entry strategy for that company. Helmi's students in return could identify a Finnish company with similar interests in Spain. "You see, it wasn't in vain. I now need a team of colleagues to start this cooperation," says Helmi to her husband who had supported her exchange by taking care of their home and children during her exchange. Lemke (2012, 96) has studied teaching staff in the Netherlands and identified the following reasons for staff not to go abroad: lack of communication, time constraints and lack of encouragement. Among personal obstacles, family reasons were the most frequently quoted hindrances.

It turned out that several colleagues had good practices to share as well. One of Helmi's closest colleagues had agreed to start a joint virtual course with an Austrian colleague, and two others had agreed to contribute to an article on innovative pedagogics. Inspired by all the positive developments the team decided to write an article about their projects for the stakeholder magazine. For the money paid for the article, they agreed to have a dinner together at a restaurant recently opened by a Lebanese alumnus.

Conclusions

In this article, our aim was to give an example of how an individual staff member could implement the strategic internationalisation goals of an institution in her daily work. It takes commitment on all layers of the university to achieve results:

from senior management to each employee. It takes communication about the strategy, and sharing and dialogue among all members of the community. Also, adequate processes, structures and report mechanisms are needed for the successful implementation of plans. Encouragement and support of middle management is crucial, as well as each individual's commitment and inspiration not just with regard to one's own work, but also on behalf of the entire organisation.

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Elina Värtö & Iris Bräuning

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: THE EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK AND THE U!REKA ALLIANCE

The strategic cooperation of higher education institutions is becoming increasingly important. This is further emphasized in the European context thanks to the European Universities Erasmus+ program, piloted in 2019. However, strategic partnerships take time and effort to build up. The article focuses on how institutions can further develop international partnerships focusing on joint strategic interests. This is exemplified by the Urban Research and Education Knowledge Alliance (U!REKA), an alliance of six practice-based and urban-focused higher education institutions (HEIs). The article also addresses the challenges of HEI collaboration intended to increase international partnerships on all levels and fields of the institutions, e.g. research and development, education, mobility, and academic services.

The Importance of Strategic Alliances

The focus of higher education institutions is moving on from internationalisation and expanding the partnership networks to deepening collaboration and creating more strategic connections.

The international relationships of HEIs have usually emerged from two paths - central institutional partnership initiatives and through individual links of researchers and lecturers.

When comparing the level of activity, partnership links have predominantly consisted of student as well as for academic and administrative staff mobility projects. Further initiatives, e.g. joint research, curriculum development, knowledge exchange or capacity building are part of more specialised collaboration types. This is also mirrored in the two editions of the EAIE Barometer on Internationalization in Europe (2015 and 2018) and the Barometer on Strategic Partnerships (2016) where mobility activities are designated to be the major activity in a partnership relation (Sandström & Weimer 2016, 6).

The previous focus on mobility is understandable since national policies and the logic of funding programs have traditionally primarily promoted mobility actions (Sandström & Weimer 2016, 5). National and European policies have recognised the need to broaden and to specialise international academic collaboration by shifting the logic of funding programs to wider thematic reference points that institutions may have. Consequently, thematic and strategic partnerships have been developed by enlarging the level of joint working areas and activities. By specialising and joining forces, international partnership networks have emerged.

The European Universities Initiative

Since 1987, Erasmus (currently Erasmus+) has been the European Unions' largest international mobility funding program. For many years, the program has promoted intensive programs, multilateral degree programs, strategic-thematic alliances of HEIs, cross-sectoral cooperation, capacity building projects and collaboration with countries outside of Europe.

During the Gothenburg summit in 2017, a major change of the European education landscape was proclaimed. The summit's conclusions shaped the vision of bottom-up Knowledge Alliances growing together into European Universities. In 2018 Erasmus+ became the driver for the European Universities Initiative, with a budget investment of 60 million euros for 12 consortia. European Universities are larger-scale Knowledge Alliances with common strategic interests willing to reach a high level of integration. The central building components are flexible mobility schemes for students, researchers, teachers and staff, close collaboration in research and development and integrated transnational study programs.

The Education Council of the European Union concluded on May 22nd, 2018 that the European Universities Programme "could play a flagship role in the creation of a European Education Area as a whole, contributing to empower new generations of European citizens and to strengthen the international competitiveness of higher education in Europe" (Education Council Conclusions 2018, 6). This shows that in addition to the HEIs' interest in focusing more on strategic partnerships, the Education Council sees strategic networks as a leading solution into a much larger issue: making European higher education more attractive a choice for potential applicants.

Developing a Strategic Network

Approaching the topic of strategic partnerships and networks requires clarification on terminology. As outlined in the previous sections, the strategic components of international collaboration have emerged from a change in funding programs along with a shift within the discourse of policy statements on national and European level. The EAIE Barometer on Strategic Partnerships reveals that the term “strategic” is often used for all types of international collaboration since the meaning of “strategic” is, first of all, a question of perspective which can change depending whether a central or decentral institutional interest is involved.

The fundamental concept behind more strategic approaches towards partnership relations is to broaden and to specialize international academic collaboration based on specific categories, such as:

- a) Core values of the institution
- b) Overall goal driving international engagement
- c) Identification of suitable partners to reach the goals

Furthermore, the development of strategic/thematic partnerships and networks requires a balanced interaction of a top-down leadership and bottom-up development of multidimensional activities to frame the collaboration.

Underlying the building process of a network is the matching of joint strategic interests and/or thematic expertise between the institutions involved. From our experience, building up an alliance should therefore be based on a profile evaluation process. It should be followed by a clear mission and strategy, outlining the motivation for and goals of the collaboration. Subsequently, these are then spelled out in an action plan and a structured implementation phase.

Table 1. Important building components for strategic approaches to international collaboration (Iris Bräuning)

Profile Evaluation	Joint Mission and Strategy	Action Plan	Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping of institutional profile / strategic goals • Joint research priorities • Joint thematic areas • Mapping of educational programs/concepts • Mobility concepts • Evaluation of complementary expertise • Regional reference • Broad institutional commitment • Decentral and individual links in the departments and units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on profile evaluation • Develop joint thematic and/or strategic profile • Phrase central ambitions for the alliance and explain the selection of partners • Define goals • Spell out ambitions and goals in an action plan • Link action plan with milestones outlining how to achieve the goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchanges of students and staff • Curriculum development • Joint teaching formats • „Joint“ degree programs • Graduate programs • Research collaboration / events • Summer Schools • Virtual/Digital collaboration • Networking activities • Align action plan with funding opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve stakeholders • Define core themes • Refine the collaboration goals • Establish a professional team to coordinate/manage projects and activities • Establish clear communication structures • Start implementation of first activities

The collaboration formats will be determined in accordance with the objectives and goals of the consortium and linked to clear management and funding rules for the implementation of the action plan. They can vary in terms of complexity and the level of integration. However, it is not usually possible to compartmentalise cooperation into a top-down or bottom-up category, and furthermore there might be existing collaboration formats that do not fit immediately into a theoretical framework. These aspects can be seen in the development of the U!REKA cooperation, where the network has become an accepted framework for cooperation for research, education and administrative projects fostered through thematic proximity of the involved institutions. This has been accompanied by the successive development of transparent joint organizational structures, a joint leadership and communication policy.

U!REKA Alliance – a Strategic University of Applied Sciences Network

Established in 2016, the Urban Research Education and Knowledge Alliance (U!REKA) is a strategic partnership of six practice-based and urban-focused higher education institutions. U!REKA focuses on applied research, professional education and the students’ future world of work, as well as higher education’s third mission: contribution to social and economic development. The partner institutions are Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Edinburgh Napier University, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki, Oslo Metropolitan University and University College Ghent.

Based on common goals and a shared urban identity, the alliance’s vision is to deliver education and research with distinctive added value and societal impact through engagement with the wider society. The institutions aim at creating solutions for the social, economic, technological and environmental challenges European societies are facing.

The focus is on the city areas of the alliance partners, since cities are taking an increasingly important role as a societal environment. This model places the utmost value on the existing relationships that each partner has with its city, public and private sector partners and local communities and as practice-based institutions an intrinsic relationship with the labor market.

U!REKA’s strategic partnership began with a focus on research, development and innovation. This is in line with strategic partnership trends: the IIE/FUB Survey on International Strategic Partnership in 2015 showed that higher education institutions have been motivated to develop international strategic partnerships from the research rather than the teaching perspective (Kuder and Banks 2016, xiii).

The cooperation began with the six current partners and is open to new partners. New membership is by invitation by the alliance’s Steering Committee, and key criteria include geographical spread and institutional fit.

U!REKA: Objectives of the Collaboration

Since its establishment in 2016, the alliance started setting up durable education and research collaborations and mobility initiatives between its partners. Naturally, the status of the institutions varies in different European countries, e.g. whether the institutions have the possibility to award PhDs, and whether the institutions have been granted university status.

The institutions involved share expertise on interdisciplinary challenges such as decarbonisation of cities and transportation, circular economy, demographic challenges and challenges posed by emerging technologies. The complementary expertise, shared goals and status of the institutions are the key drivers for joining forces and moving forward together.

Through its joint activities U!REKA aims to implement the UN Sustainability Goals. This is done by increasing accessibility and diversity in higher education through the development of

- Flexible curricula
- Modules and mobility options
- Active promotion of learning a second language
- Multilingual competences.

Organizing a Strategic Alliance

When establishing the alliance in 2016, the U!REKA partners drew up the alliance's Cooperation Agreement, which sets the basis for cooperation. It aligns that the Steering Committee is the highest decision-making body of U!REKA, assembling one official representative per institution.

Based on the replies in the IIE/FUB Survey on International Strategic Partnership, Kuder and Banks note that in addition to having the right criteria used for partner selection and identifying the best partners, the main challenges recognized in strategic partnerships are connected with:

- Resources required for the management of partnerships as well as funding opportunities for research collaboration;
- Communication and coordination, both within the single institution and across the partnership (2016, xxiii-xxiv).

These challenges have been recognized within the U!REKA cooperation. The U!REKA alliance has created active working groups as resources to support the management of the partnership. A Coordinators' Committee, consisting of one or two representatives from each partner, develops and tracks the progress of collaborative activities under the leadership of the Steering Committee. The Coordinators' Committee acts

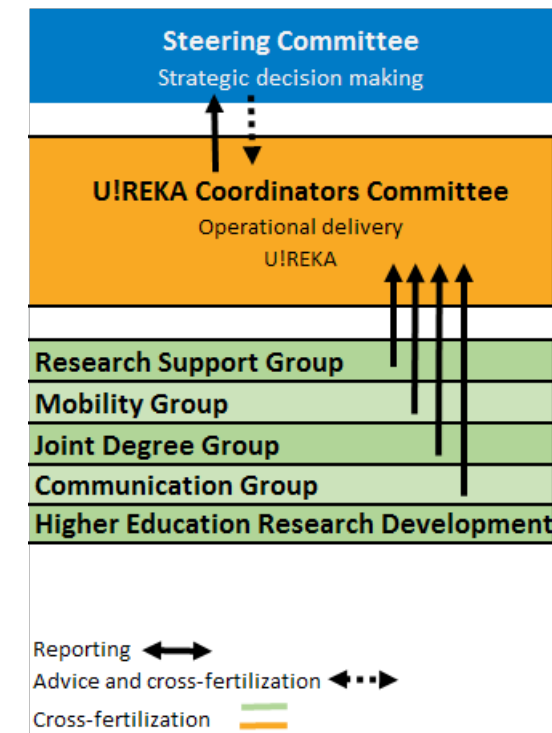


Figure 1. U!REKA organizational chart (Iris Bräuning)

as a link to the working groups of the alliance listed below, and helps those interested in taking part in the cooperation to find suitable partners.

Five thematic working groups plan and implement activities further. They currently include Research Support, Mobility, Joint Programs, Communication, and Higher Education Research and Development working groups. Regarding the challenge of finding resources for cooperation, the Research Support working group has focused on finding beneficial research collaboration possibilities and suitable funding opportunities for those projects.

Regarding financial resources, the institutions have also had some earmarked funding available for e.g. staff mobility between the alliance partners. The partners have agreed that the funding opportunities are institution-based instead of a shared funding plan to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy and dealing with three different currencies.

To tackle the challenges in communication, a working group of experts in this field develops communication channels both within and outside the alliance. The alliance shares joint communication channels such as the ureka.eu website, as well as Twitter and LinkedIn accounts.

U!REKA's yearly conferences offer a platform for sharing research information and creating new cooperation possibilities. The conferences also increase the awareness of the alliance within the institutions. U!REKA has offered a possibility for "pop-up" working groups to meet during the conferences and benchmark their operations, which has already been done by the library services of the institutions, for example.

The "Higher Education Research & Development" (HERD) group serves as an example of a working group established after the first U!REKA conference. HERD serves as an interface for research, educational development and innovation. The group is focusing their research activities on HR and other organizational activities, professional development and institutional strategies to connect research and education. Topics include work-based learning, graduate education, teacher development, and research competencies in the curriculum. The working group members hold regular meetings to move forward with their joint activities and projects.

However, creating new methods of collaboration is not always an easy task, and to keep the initial contacts flourishing requires resources and buy-in. The cooperation has evolved throughout the early years, which naturally means that some projects do not come to fruition. However, it has been positive to notice that U!REKA has become a point of reference within the institutions leading to new opportunities to develop research and internationalisation, and creating links between academic colleagues and departments.

U!REKA therefore acts as an example of a modern strategic network, developing according to the new requirements set for HEIs. It draws on its strengths as an alliance of universities of applied sciences, including close cooperation with cities and the industry, its diverse and inclusive nature, and the ability to react fast. The close cooperation that has already emerged in a relatively young alliance shows the potential for growing into a network that has both very strategic as well as very concrete cooperation.

Conclusions

Strategic partnership networks are deemed important by the higher education institutions as well as the European Union officials. This is proven by the increasing level of thematic and specialized collaboration formats in the various funding schemes and by the recently piloted European Universities call, which explicitly asks all types of HEIs for their contribution. This has also motivated universities of applied sciences with expertise in applied research and teaching practices to build strategic alliances based on their particular methodology and profile. This will foster a long track record of impact on educational concepts.

The establishment of strategic alliances requires careful profile evaluation and the definition of joint mission and strategy in the alliance. Consequently, the alliance

needs to create action plans and implement joint activities. To be able to flourish, the alliance must address possible challenges regarding the cooperation focus, management and communication issues.

The cooperation profile of the U!REKA strategic alliance consists of urban, practice-based research and education, and the focus is on the challenges European cities are facing. The alliance has developed joint organisational structures, leadership and communication policy, which have nurtured a well-functioning framework for cooperation in research, education and administrative projects.

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Terhi Topi

HARNESSING ERASMUS+ FOR STRATEGIC NORTH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIPS

The Erasmus programme is a corner stone of pan-European mobility for both students and staff alike. It is funded by the European Union and has successfully supported the internationalisation of Europeans since 1987. In 2015 the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility (ICM) programme was launched to allow higher education institutions in Erasmus programme countries, such as Finland, to develop mobility cooperation with other parts of the world. Metropolia University of Applied Sciences has successfully utilised the Erasmus+ ICM to enhance cooperation with certain key regions and partners located outside Europe.

Metropolia selected North America as one such region for several reasons. Deepening cooperation with North American higher education institutions is Metropolia's strategic goal. Finnish students find Canada and the United States an interesting destination for its location and high quality higher education. The countries work closely together in many international organisations and on strategic global issues, such as arctic issues in Arctic Council and Northern Dimension of EU.

North America was also selected due to some of the challenges we face with the region. One of the basic principles of student exchange agreements is to maintain balance in mobility numbers: roughly equal number of students come and go. This balance is particularly central with bilateral agreements and, from the Finnish perspective, most problematic with Canada and the United States. We have far more

Finns going out than Americans and Canadians coming in. This imbalance of mobility is a perennial problem and tackling it one of the central issues from year to year.

Challenges in Student Exchange from North America

The low level of interest for North American students is often attributed to the lack of knowledge about Finland. Finland is very distant to American students with the perceived cold northern weather and the misunderstanding of not being able to study in English. In most cases, however, students just do not know Finland at all.

It is also important to realise that we are fighting against greater odds. According to the Institute of International Education's (IIE) Open Doors 2018 figures, only 16% of U.S. bachelor's students studied abroad during their degree program and approximately 65% of these took part in summer or short-term programs of less than eight weeks. Twenty percent of the students headed for countries where English is the native language. None of the Nordic countries is among the top twenty five destinations. So the question is not only why Finland, it is why anywhere, and why not outside the traditionally Anglophone regions. Canadian Bureau for International Education (2016, 50, 55) reports similar findings: only 2,3% of undergraduate and graduate students go abroad during their studies and destinations are France, UK and USA.

The low mobility numbers are often explained by the pace of studies due to tuition costs. As the IIE's report Study Abroad Matters: Linking Higher Education to the Contemporary Workplace through International Experience (2018) states, the tuition costs in the United States have risen dramatically and students and parents alike are increasingly interested in the return of their investment. The United States is one of the most expensive countries to study in, so students are understandably cautious to have anything intervene with their pace of study and timely graduation. Student exchange becomes problematic, if academic departments are not able to guarantee credit recognition upon return.

Not surprisingly, however, the low level of interest most often zeros in on the lack of funding. On top of their tuition costs at home, student exchange does bring about additional costs, yet there are very few sources of external funding. Canadian Bureau for International Education (2016, 47) indicates that 29% of Canadian students name financial barriers as the main reason for not participating in study abroad programs and 80% of students say that they would need financial assistance to go abroad.

Erasmus+ to Strengthen Strategic Partner Collaboration

In countries such as Finland, it is crucial to be proactive and think of ways to tackle the above-mentioned challenges, if we aim at quality cooperation with balanced student flows. The Erasmus+ ICM programme gave us one way to do that. We have been successful with project proposals on cooperation with Canada and the United States,

with funding ensured for staff and faculty cooperation and student exchanges for the years 2016-2020.

We have identified certain key aspects on developing proposals and carrying them through successfully. For example, strategic focus at institutional level and clearly defined mobility goals help to identify and carry through sustainable projects, as detailed below.

Metropolia's Strategic Choices

In order for the ICM cooperation to work well on all levels, we feel it is important to tie the partner selection and project content in institution-wide interests and strategy. As ICM funding is extremely competitive, particularly in Finland with North American partners, we believe that this approach has contributed to the success of our ICM applications. Based on our own experience, projects tied to a single issue, relying on personal connections, have built-in structural risks. Too detailed and specific projects run the risk of failing when people change.

In the case of North America, as in most of our ICM collaboration, we chose to work with partners we are already familiar with and that make sense institution-wide, involving several fields of study or aiming at a potential multiplier effect. We also made a conscious choice to select partners that have a clear commitment to international mobility and well-functioning infrastructure to support it, not entertaining new initiatives with new and potential partners, at least not yet.

Within this institutional framework, we made some content choices as well. We decided first to concentrate on trying to fix the balance of mobility. Furthermore, we started with administrative partnership building and getting people to know each other better.

Student Mobility Goals

Metropolia made a strategic choice to focus on incoming student mobility in particular. Student mobility funding was applied only for incoming students, and teacher and staff mobility funding was also targeted to boost mobility flows from North America to Finland. We saw that as a direct way to work on the balance of exchanges. Healthier balance on student numbers helps us sustain mobility flows on both sides. Since the Erasmus+ funding is only available for long-term exchanges of min. 3 months, it also switches the focus away from short-term study trips so common on the US side.

The availability of funding gives our partners tools to promote exchanges to Metropolia. The perceived high cost of exchanges and Finland as a destination is off set with a source of funds. It also helps us compete with other destinations in Europe. Many of our US and Canadian students have mentioned the availability of



funds to be the key reason why they were able to come to Finland. Furthermore, it is important to note that such targeted scholarship campaigns raise the overall visibility of Metropolia and Finland as a destination.

Our goal is to reach a more robust flow of students when there is a documented history of successful exchanges and an alumni base to tell a story to their peers. We are actively engaging the visiting students to document their experience with video and photo posts. A larger US and Canadian alumni base gives us a way to directly influence students' perceptions of Finland: you can afford it, you can study in English, we have high quality programmes and we are a safe destination, to name a few topics of interest for our North American counterparts.

Importance of Staff Mobility

With the help of ICM, we have been able to offer our partners targeted mobility funding also for teacher and staff exchanges. This has been highly appreciated by our US and Canadian partners as it seems to be one of the very few ways to fund international administrative cooperation across borders and classroom teaching, rather than pure research. From the North American perspective, it is also fairly low threshold and light to administer, as the greater responsibility lies on the European partner.

Having administrative and teaching staff involved from early on creates a multiplier effect on many levels. For example, commitment at both institutional as well as departmental level ensures successful execution of the program activities.

We started with visits by the international relations staff. This has strengthened the level of knowledge about one another, our administrative structures, and mobility services overall. It has also allowed us to build on the current partnership as well as identify and add new areas of shared interest. Indeed, Finnish and North American institutions seem to have a variety of similar goals in their institutional strategies. For example, the initial visits helped us identify digitalisation and sustainability as focus areas for staff and teacher exchanges, both high on the institutional agendas. Collaboration on strategically important goals has strengthened the value of the partnership and extended collaborative initiatives also to spheres outside traditional mobility.

Teaching visits, on the other hand, have included both tailor made lecturing programmes and intensive week participations. These visits have contributed in the increase of institution-wide visibility. Each incoming teacher as well as staff participant in Erasmus+ ICM becomes a Metropolia Honorary Ambassador after the completion of the exchange. We ask the Ambassadors to serve as good will representatives of Finland and Metropolia in their own institution and share their experiences to students, staff, and faculty alike. The increased faculty connections and visibility have already resulted in further faculty visits, funded from the institutions' own funds.

Teachers are also key persons to encourage student exchange. Their personal experiences and commitment can greatly impact students' motivations. According to IIE's report *Study Abroad Matters: Linking Higher Education to the Contemporary Workplace through International Experience* (2018, 15), faculty encouragement and understanding are critical in student exchanges for example in STEM fields where traditionally rigid curricula have not allowed for student exchange. In the case of Metropolia, the knowledge and experience teachers have gained during their own mobilities have indeed trickled down to students and we slowly start seeing more students interested in Metropolia. Teacher accounts and recommendations have lowered the threshold of international mobility for students. Most importantly, the academic trust teachers have developed during their visits and the new knowledge about the respective curricula they have gained has made credit evaluation as well as recognition easier.

Towards balanced flows and multifaceted collaboration

The Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility programme gives institutions an opportunity for strategic partnership building. Metropolia has been successful in utilising it to work on specific goals. We will not change the imbalance on student mobility overnight, but by focusing on well defined, well working relationships, strides can be made.

In this case, specific goals have led to broad scope cooperation and we have managed to elevate our partnership in several ways, perhaps also evening out past imbalances with new forms of activity. ICM collaboration has indeed solidified the institution-wide commitment and mutual appreciation on both sides.

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Erja Turunen

ENHANCING THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S EDUCATION THROUGH COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS

To recognize the potential within international collaborative networks, especially for professional master's education one needs to examine relevant programmes and their special attributes. What follows is an example of a university-level collaborative structure, which allows for action and intra-organisational learning in the process of internationalising master's education.

Bilateral collaboration often starts with a random activity - e.g. staff exchange - but can soon become systematic and multidisciplinary. A Finnish-Korean case will be presented to exemplify this process. The role of a network builder brings about new dimensions to international collaboration.

All master's students studying at universities of applied sciences are, by definition, involved in research, development and innovation (RDI). Their potential in the internationally focused RDI activities has rarely been recognized or utilized. We conclude this article by presenting ideas for more effective international collaboration where master's students play a bigger role.

Professional Master's programmes in Finland - A National Educational Innovation

Professional master's education provided by Finnish universities of applied sciences (UAS) since 2002 carries the label of "national educational innovation", proposed by The Rectors' Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences – Arene (Ammattikorkeakoulujen rehtorineuvosto Arene ry 2016, 19). Support for this rather strong statement was gathered in surveys the Council conducted among master's alumni, with current students representing working life, as well as from directors of education. Based on these results, guidelines for further development of master's education were outlined.

Degree programmes leading to professional master's degrees have been a permanent part of the Finnish educational system since 2005. By the end of 2017, as many as 18,540 master's degrees had been awarded by the Finnish UAS's (Kelo and Ala-Nikkola 2018, 6). The number has risen rapidly close to 30,000. At Metropolia UAS, as many as 25 master's degree programmes are offered (Kelo & Ala-Nikkola 2018, 11), ranking it the largest provider of master's programmes in the Finnish UAS sector.

A professional master's degree can be achieved in one or two years. In the field of culture, for example, the structure is 240 ECTS + 60 ECTS, whereas in business it is 210 ECTS + 90 ECTS, both reaching the 300 ECTS total as required in the European educational system, bachelor and master levels combined.

While appreciating the outcomes of master's education provided at universities of applied sciences in general, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture expects greater RDI impact in regional development as well as deeper international collaboration taking place in the strategy phase 2017-2020. The same elements are naturally highlighted in the strategy of Metropolia UAS.

How have professional master's programmes responded to the call? This topic will be discussed in the framework of Metropolia UAS and Metropolia Master's Network, an organisational structure where master's programmes across disciplines collaborate and share best practices.

Building and maintaining trust within networks is suggested as a key factor for success in internationalisation. We will present an example case of Finnish-Korean partnership to highlight the significance of trust in long-term collaboration. Finally, we will offer some initiatives for more effective international collaboration.

Pedagogy and RDI integration in Professional Master's education

What makes the UAS pillar of the dual university system so unique is the RDI context, starting from bachelor's programmes with a strong emphasis on working life. Master's programmes are, indeed, expected to bring about new innovations,

practices and knowledge, as well as new management and development skills, all of which the more advanced students apply immediately into practice. As the master's students study alongside working full time, authentic platforms for testing and implementation are in use.

The work experience requirement is another special feature: currently, a minimum of three years of relevant work experience must be acquired after a bachelor's degree before entering the master level. This enables the sharing of expertise and joint learning, which shape and improve businesses already during the studies. Various tripartite models have been developed where the integration of learning and RDI has been successful (eg. Nurminen et al, 2015, 58; Lampinen & Turunen 2015, 8).

Connectedness to working life is implemented most effectively in the largest single learning assignment of any master's programme: the master's thesis. With very few exceptions, it is an R&D project commissioned by the student's employer organisation and conducted with an action research approach.

As Halonen and Hoffrén (2018, 8-11) observe, a UAS student's expertise is particularly demonstrated throughout the professional development task which each student is engaged in when writing their master's thesis. They focus on actual problems of the working life and solve them. They not only engage themselves but most often a group of other (key) members of the organisation in the development process and activities. Master's students have an active role in promoting change. The role of the supervisor is to gently support "the cool distance of the developer" in relation to the development target (Halonen & Hoffrén 2018, 11).

The Rectors' Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences listed the special pedagogical features linked to professional master's education. Among such features are:

- connectedness to working life, proactive recognition of competence gaps, as well as competences built for the future;
- multidisciplinary contents and learning environments;
- connection to the RDI activities;
- research-based development work and approach; problem-based approach; learning by doing (LbD);
- co-creation, dialogue, peer learning, socio-constructive learning;
- creativity and responsibility;
- e-learning; as well as
- practices and models supporting the implementation of high-quality master's education. (Ammattikorkeakoulujen rehtorineuvosto Arene ry 2016, 17).

To what extent do these special features include an international element? Do we fully utilize the opportunities for more impactful international collaboration provided by the special features of master's education? We discuss the topic in the following chapters with a qualitative, experience-based approach.

Metropolia Master's Network - A Platform for RDI and International Collaboration Across Disciplines

Since the start of master's education in 2002, the Metropolia lecturers, degree programme heads, and administrators collaborated as an unofficial network to share experiences and to co-develop the Level 7 education, as outlined in the European Qualifications Framework for higher education, EQF (eg. Ammattikorkeakoulujen rehtorineuvosto ARENE ry 2007; Auvinen et al 2010). A nationwide master's development network, supported by the Ministry of Education and Culture, was an excellent group of reference for the first decade, too.

In 2013, the status of collaboration within Metropolia UAS changed: the Metropolia Master's Network was established and recognised as an official forum for both strategic and operational development. A part-time Development Manager position was established to lead the network and its development work. In 2017, the position became full-time.

Strategy funding was directed to the activities of the Metropolia Master's Network in 2014 - 2016. Strategic goals were set and multidisciplinary teams were formed in 2014 according the topics of the strategy-to-action plan. Members joined by invitation, rather than being appointed, with the idea of having all four sectors of education represented: business, culture, engineering, as well as social work and health care. The same teams continued in 2015.

The activity of the Master's Network was seen as an important part of quality assurance and was accredited as such by the FINHEEC Quality System auditors in 2015.

A team for advancing the internationalisation of master's education was established proactively in 2016. The Master's Summer School initiated at the Business School has expanded to other sectors, the concept of study trips within an advanced professional course - also piloted in the Business School and shared with other disciplines - as well as more systematic inclusion of master's education into outgoing and incoming staff exchanges are examples of the collaboration in this internal development network.

Strategic Focus through the Innovation Hubs

Significant RDI areas were defined in the Metropolia RDI strategy in 2018. Phenomena which call for action, and resources, were identified. The newly established Innovation Hubs shall lead the way in:

- Customer-oriented Wellbeing and Health Services;
- Clean and Sustainable Solutions;
- Data-driven Construction;
- Functional City for People; and
- Smarter Mobility.

In professional master's education, multidisciplinary projects and other forms of RDI collaboration are expected to emerge around the Innovation Hubs. From the earlier themes, two internationally oriented RDI projects are worth mentioning here:

- Diversity and Inclusion Management - a nationwide, externally funded R&D project in 2014-2015, which led to the inclusion of this must-have skill (Timonen et al 2014) to all Metropolia master's curricula, thus internationalizing the master's curricula.
- Sustainable Education for Sustainable Future - a rising R&D area, the initial planning of which took place in a Finnish-Egyptian partnership framework in 2017-2018. This is an example of wide-scope collaboration where partners are equal developers who mutually benefit from the culture of co-creation (eg. Prahalad & Krishnan 2008; Harra, Mäkinen & Sipari 2013).

Excellent PISA results and appraisals for the Finnish educational system in the country in question (eg. reports by The Finnish Embassy in Cairo in 2015 and 2016) give a steady background for educational development in collaboration. However, the cultural, economic, social, and other factors of the surrounding society and economy always set the frame for and have an impact in how and when partners can proceed. Dialogue and genuine collaboration are the keys to long-term success. Patience, trusting personal relations, and open communication within the multicultural project team contribute to keeping plans alive even when obstacles appear.

International Collaboration in Professional Master's Education - Deeper and Wider in Mutually Rewarding Partnerships

This chapter presents an international partnership between a Finnish UAS and a Korean university, which has grown to cover both bachelor and master levels and has found several forms of ongoing collaboration.

The Korean partner in question is Kyungpook National University (KNU), a partner of Metropolia Business School since late 2000s. Both are members of the NICE Network. EU funding helped develop work placement activities in 2009-2011. The first contacts at master's level followed from there. In 2011, Metropolia UAS, the Business School, organised its first Master's Summer School where a Korean professor was invited to teach an international supply chain management course. The mutual satisfaction in this experience paved way to an annual visit by another Korean professor since 2012; a professor of management and innovation.

As it happens, the visiting professor had started to organize conferences at KNU that soon became a forum of staff and even student visits from Europe to Asia.

Metropolia's collaboration with Kyungpook National University has expanded from the Business School to other schools and areas such as Health Care, Health Business Management and Early Childhood Education. In addition to regularly lecturing at the Master's Summer School, KNU professors have paid several visits to Finland. Externally funded project collaboration is ongoing, and invitations to conferences happen both ways.

An interesting offspring of the Master's Summer School is collaboration between the University of Eastern Finland (UEF) and KNU. Two staff members of the UEF attended Master's Summer School at Metropolia in 2012, which led to mutual conference visits and personally as well as culturally rewarding relationships between the Korean professor and his family vs Finnish colleagues in Eastern Finland. Metropolia and UEF faculty have since been partners. The role of Metropolia UAS has been that of a network builder - or a matchmaker - an important role that rarely gets recognition.

From the master's education perspective, as mentioned, student mobility is part of Finnish-Korean collaboration. The annual conference in Daegu, South Korea, offers the Finnish master's students a chance to internationalise together with Korean students in an authentic, inspiring environment. Since 2012, study trips have been organised for the business and engineering students studying in master's programmes at the Business School. The concept has been developed over the years so that it has become a best practice in the Metropolia Master's Network - part of the strategic development referred to above. Destinations vary from Germany - three partner universities involved so far - and the Netherlands to South Korea. The second group to Korea is gathering and will attend the November 2019 Conference on 'Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Business Transformation'.

A key to success in study trips is collaboration with the partner university in the target country. The itinerary for the visit must be planned together in order to maximize learning. A clear connection to the curriculum and the learning outcomes of the course must be shown.

Towards More Effective International Collaboration

Combining the special learning platform of professional master's education to the RDI activities and the strategic goals of the university of applied sciences, and recognising the valuable experiences from the internal development network as well as the relationships and experiences (= network capital) of the international partnerships, two possible forms of more advanced international collaboration at master's level are suggested here:

To build upon the trusted partnership with Kyungpook National University, Metropolia UAS (the Business School) wishes to initiate a modified professional master-level education leading to an academic degree, possibly a joint degree. As

the times call for more rapid competence enhancement of employees, thus flexible modes of education, this part-time programme would largely rely on virtual learning and would definitely include short-term student mobility. As experienced, study trips give deeper understanding of the business cultures and the business models relevant in the partner markets. Opportunities for real business collaboration desirably emerge, since master's students already hold responsible positions in their companies, and they all have three or more years of work experience before they enter the programme.

An increasing form for future collaboration is research on educational systems. Developing sustainable, collaborative educational cooperation would offer an interesting action research platform for researchers and practitioners in both countries, referring to the annual conferences organised at KNU in Korea. The network would expand through their own international contacts, and make an impact in educational development even more widely. We strongly recommend the networker role, not only to Metropolia UAS but to other institutions of higher education (HEI) that hold aspirations for making a difference.

Coming to another part of the globe, international educational collaboration in the Arab world is expanding. Export of education also from Finland has increased, partly thanks to the favourable Pisa results. Collaborative ways of developing entire educational systems is a viable goal if an HEI wishes to stand out and lead the way. With the newly established Innovation Hubs, Metropolia UAS has positioned itself very well: "smart cities" and "eco-cities" are rising all around the world. With the help of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (eg. The Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2016), the SDG's, we can only imagine the sphere of activities where many educators, administrators, and students can participate globally. The academic sector, businesses, cities, regions - in one world, one planet.

Internationalisation of master's education is far beyond student mobility and staff/faculty exchange. These are great first steps, but so much more can be done. To succeed in the demanding, evolving environments, we need trusted partners. Partners build networks, an intangible asset so often left unrecognized. Building and sustaining trust in international collaborative networks is the best possible investment for the future. Let us engage our master's students in this thrilling global development mission!

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Kaija Haapasalo & Anne Perkiö

FROM SHORT EXCHANGES TO DIVERSE STRATEGIC COOPERATION

The definition of internationalisation in higher education has changed over the past few years. Internationalisation can be defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education. (Knight 2015) Internationalisation is not just about the number of international students. Higher education institutions are adopting a comprehensive approach to internationalisation, which also includes various ways to offer international experiences to different kinds of students. In order to be competitive and to succeed, a clear internationalisation plan and strategy are needed. However, you cannot develop a comprehensive international strategy on your own, but you need good academic, research and industry partners who share the same ambition to develop both global graduates, citizens and researchers. (Adrey 2016.)

In this article with help of two cases, we discuss the approach that the Business School of Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (Helsinki area, Finland) has taken to develop strategic cooperation with a few selected partners. Developing the degree programmes in cooperation with chosen partners as well as the curriculum including more digital content, have been among the key actions in the Metropolia Business School Road Map for 2017-2020.

Since the beginning of the first international degree programmes of Metropolia Business School (European Business Administration and European Management in the 1990's), the internationalisation strategy has always been to nurture the cooperation with carefully chosen partners. The partnerships are kept alive by investing

time and nominating dedicated staff members, who visit the international weeks of the partner institutions and develop the personal relationships and curriculum.

International Business and Logistics degree programme was started in 2008 and right from its beginning, the strategy has been to intensify the special focus area of the degree, logistics and supply chain management. Thus, the target has been to find partners with similar focus area and interests. For the Business Administration degree programme, in which the tuition is in Finnish, it has always been a must to be part of international networks. The cooperation with htw saar and the partnership in HUMINT network is a great example of developing a strategic partnership in a very systematic way in order to meet both the development needs of the degree programmes and the internationalisation plan of Metropolia Business School.

Development story of Metropolia UAS and htw saar UAS

The partnership between Metropolia and Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft des Saarlandes (htw saar, Saarbrücken, Germany) provides a great example of developing strategic partnerships in higher education in the long-term. High commitment and the personal connections of a few staff members have enabled this strategic relationship, which does not focus only on student and staff exchanges but to a joint innovation and Research and Development (R&D) framework, leading to joint double degree curriculum development and digitalisation of pedagogy. All these actions strongly support Metropolia's and htw saar's strategy of digitalisation and becoming a stronger international R&D actor.

It all started in March 2011 during the "Europe Week" event hosted by the University of Hertfordshire. Both Metropolia and htw saar were open for new partnerships especially interested in entrepreneurship and business logistics related studies. These fruitful discussions led to invitations to participate at the International Weeks of both UAS institutions. Over the past years, several lecturers from both universities have shared their knowledge and experiences with the students and other colleagues, either by attending the International Week via the Erasmus+ teaching mobility programme or by organising their own joint innovation project courses. In many cases the co-operation is based on blended learning in which both virtual and physical mobility enhances learning together.

Joint innovation projects and international R&D

The first joint project course was conducted during spring 2016. During this course students from the International Business and Logistics programme of Metropolia and BBA students from htw saar worked together making research about logistical issues of the refugee crises management in Finland and in Germany. The project was supervised by professors and senior lecturers from both universities. Students communicated via webinars and shared their research data utilising online project

management software and cloud services. The climax of the project was a common intensive week in May in Saarbrücken during which the research report was finalised. The main findings were presented to the audience of the intensive week of htw saar as well as via webinar connections to an audience at Metropolia in Finland.

This strategic approach in the partnership on R&D co-operation between staff and students has continued and since 2016 already two other joint innovation project courses following the same model as the first one, have taken place. The main theme of the second joint innovation project was city logistics solutions in the Helsinki area in Finland and in Saarbrücken Germany. In 2018, another partner university of htw saar, the University of Economics in Katowice Poland, joined the consortium and the third joint innovation project was held in Katowice involving students and staff from all three universities. This project aimed at comparing smart city logistics concepts in Finland, Poland and Germany. The fourth innovation project about reverse logistics took place in May 2019 in Saarbrücken. To enable this co-operation and subject-specific short exchanges, students have received grants from their home universities and degree programmes. Students are also willing to invest some of their own money for this useful and interesting learning experience.

Towards double degree agreements and digital pedagogy

The partnership between Metropolia and htw saar is not restricted only to business students and staff. Both industrial engineering and business administration



Metropolia staff and students involved in DD programme and joint innovation project at htw saar in Saarbrücken 2019. Picture: Kaija Haapasalo.

students are able to benefit from Erasmus student exchange agreements and students have been able to experience other cultures and curriculum choices already for several years.

Encouraged by the exchange of students and staff and the abovementioned joint innovation projects, the heads of the degree programmes of both universities started to discuss the possibility of deepening the partnership even further. As a result, a double degree agreement was signed first regarding the Industrial Management (Metropolia) and Industrial Engineering (htw saar) in December 2015 and this strategic development in partnership was continued by a similar double degree agreement in October 2018 between the business schools of both universities. Already a few engineering students have started their double degree studies in 2017 and the first business students will start their studies in the autumn 2019.

The joint innovation projects utilising online tools as well as the strategic targets of digitalisation and international R&D have motivated to look for external funding to support these activities and goals. Therefore, Metropolia and htw saar have agreed to cooperate in the new IMKD program (International Mobility and Cooperation through Digitalization) launched by the DAAD -German Academic Exchange Service DAAD - in case htw saar's project application is accepted. This project aims at implementing blended mobility and to develop jointly digitally supported study modules for students and training sessions for faculty and staff members.

Digitalisation together with sourcing and logistics have been two officially defined strategic focus areas out of four in total in the strategy of Metropolia Business School already since 2017. Common logistics related innovation projects, blended mobility and the latest development of double degree agreement between Metropolia Business School and htw saar support these strategic focus areas and key actions exceptionally well. Both staff and students have benefitted from the new curriculum development, project-based learning and digitalisation of pedagogy. The systematic work has led into very versatile cooperation, which hopefully develops even further in the future and supports Metropolia's strategy of becoming an open and impactful actor in the field of research and innovation also internationally.

Metropolia's journey to the HUMINT network

Another example of Metropolia's more strategic focused collaboration is our partnership with Saxion University of Applied Sciences in Enschede the Netherlands. Metropolia has had the pleasure to take part in cooperation which was initiated at the EAIE Conference in Dublin 2012. Interest of both Metropolia and Saxion UAS to offer more internationalisation possibilities also for adult learners has led to a diverse HUMINT network and cooperation of five universities in Europe. This network organises an annual conference on Diversity Management for their business students. The students benefit from this possibility to learn in a truly multicultural environment.

The Coordinator of International Relations from Saxion UAS and the Head of Business Administration programme from Metropolia met at a workshop at the EAIE Conference in Dublin in 2012. In this workshop also the challenges of internationalisation of part-time adult students were discussed. It was immediately discovered that both institutions had the same concerns and discussions of possible solutions were started. In spring 2013 a lecturer and a group of part-time adult students participated in Saxion UAS's International Week. In addition to the regular programme they had the opportunity to visit the lectures of the part-time students in Saxion and it was a very positive get-together. When the students talked about their studies, work and life, it seemed that the challenges in the Netherlands and Finland were very similar. It was also a great internationalisation experience for the Saxion students and an opportunity for the Finnish students to share their thoughts with their student peers.

New opportunities through an expanding network?

The cooperation between Metropolia and Saxion has continued and students and lecturers have been exchanged on a regular basis. In 2014 Metropolia was invited to join the HUMINT network. The HUMINT network was established by five institutions of higher education in Europe: Saxion University of Applied Sciences (The Netherlands), University Colleges Leuven-Limburg, Leuven (Belgium), St-Mary's University College Belfast (Northern Ireland), University of Applied Sciences BFI Vienna (Austria) and Université de Bretagne Occidentale, Quimper (France). A few years later Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania joined this network too. The HUMINT network organises a Diversity Management conference for students from the partner institutions. Each member of the network organises the conference in turn. Thus, the place and country of the conference and the host rotates. Metropolia's students participated in the conference for the first time in 2015 in Iasi, Romania and in 2016 it was Metropolia's turn to organise the conference for the first time.

Each partner institution can send to the conference about 10 students who work in mixed international groups. They discuss cases which deal with different aspects of diversity management. The conference includes key speakers, workshops, cultural programmes and activities organised by the students. This HUMINT conference has been a huge success among Metropolia students and there is always a lot more students interested in participating that can be sent to this event.

Unfortunately, the member from Northern Ireland had to leave the network in 2018 but now the current six members continue their cooperation. Also, the members of the network that were not partners with Metropolia before have now signed a bilateral Erasmus+ agreement and some cooperation in the area of research has also been initiated.

Lessons learnt

Nowadays it is relatively easy to start teacher and student exchange with a new partner without any specific strategic focus. Finland and Metropolia seem to be an attractive destination and therefore Metropolia Business School is contacted by many higher education institutions that are interested in student and teacher exchange. However, to build a long-term strategic cooperation or partnership you need to have a systematic internationalisation plan and a clear vision. Metropolia Business School was active and chose to collaborate with new potential partners. This enabled new possibilities which have enriched especially the short exchange options for the business students both full and part-time. Even though personal contacts of staff members are a key element in building innovative cooperation, the engagement of the management is essential in encouraging the staff to explore new cooperation opportunities. The teacher and staff exchanges are important in keeping the relationships alive but also an essential source of new ideas and an origin of future collaboration possibilities.

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II INTERNATIONALISATION THROUGH MOBILITY

Sari Heikkinen, Pia Tamminen, Pyry Airaksinen, Takashi Ishizuki, Kenichi Kudo & Akito Mori

CO-CREATING AN UNDERSTANDING OF FINNISH AND JAPANESE ELDERLY CARE SERVICES THROUGH EXPLORING AND LEARNING TOGETHER

The FinJap project investigates Finnish and Japanese elderly care services from different interdisciplinary perspectives. The project has been set up to enable sharing of ideas and finding solutions for future challenges in elderly care services. The project also provides an opportunity for students to study in a multinational team and to learn from each other. Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Laurea) is responsible for coordinating the project in cooperation with the two other project partners, Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) and Japanese Tohoku Fukushi University (TFU).

FinJap is a pilot project that aims to explore how elderly care is organised in Japan and Finland and how the wellbeing of elderly people is sustained in both countries. Elderly care is a challenge in societies with rapidly ageing populations. The project's primary objective is to investigate elderly care services and the financing of such services in Finland and Japan. The project is funded by the [Asia Programme - Education Cooperation operated by the Finnish National Agency for Education](#).

To understand the complexity of elderly care services, the services are studied from a broad range of standpoints. As elderly care is a formidable challenge in Finland and Japan, the topic must be investigated from an interdisciplinary perspective in order

to understand the present situation in both countries as well as to prepare plans for the future. To tackle the challenge, a multi-professional and multinational team collaborated on the planning and implementation of the FinJap project. The parties to the project represent a wide array of disciplines: gerontology, social policy, business and design management, business studies, educational science, and service design.

The project is student-centered and collaborative, which means that the students learn from one another in an international learning environment. As the project follows Laurea's P2P (peer-to-peer) learning model, the students are responsible for meeting learning targets. The project is also highly interactive, with face-to-face study weeks in Japan and Finland, and regular communication with Zoom, Skype, emails and other social media channels. In addition, the overall learning process is supported by service design methods, the students' own reflections and thoughts, as well as the recognition of the joy of learning. The project is designed to progress in a reflective manner – namely, it evolves according to the students' own reflections and thoughts when needed. The different learning methods and the joy associated with learning ensure that the atmosphere of the project is open and that motivation levels remain high throughout the project.

Elderly care - a common challenge

The population of Finland and Japan is aging rapidly, and the population ratio is steeper than in any other country in the world. Despite the significant difference in the number of people in Finland (5.5 million) and Japan (127 million), the demographic structure of the two countries is remarkably similar. Dramatic falls in fertility rates and increased life expectancy in both countries have led to a rapidly aging population. In Finland, population growth continues to be flat, with the number of deaths exceeding the number of births. However, an increase in the number of immigrants has compensated for the decline in birth rates. In Japan, the natural change rate has been on a declining trend since 2005. As of 2015, the old-age dependency ratio (person aged 65+ vs persons aged 15-64) for Finland was 32 and for Japan 43 (The United Nations, 2017). These numbers indicate that fewer than three working-age persons support one older person in both countries. At the same time the number of working-age people supporting elderly people is expected to continue to decrease in both countries.

The similar demographic structure of Japan and Finland offers many advantages with regard to promoting joint educational projects. It is also easy to understand that there are various factors that cause the challenging change in population structure in the two countries. Moreover, a joint educational project between these two developed countries can be a valuable model for other countries undergoing rapid population aging.

Elderly care in Finland and Japan include many similar services such as preventive care, rehabilitation, home care, home visit nursing, as well as short-term and

long-term stay. Public and private sectors and NGOs offer these services. The service costs are covered by taxes in Finland. In Japan, the costs are covered mainly by social insurance, which is financed by premiums and taxes. Although monetary resources and systems for providing care services differ, the two countries experience similar challenges in how to support the elderly with only limited resources. There are also various national constraints affecting the provision of elderly care in Finland and Japan, including workforce requirements, integration of services, regional challenges, the use of technology and robotics, as well as the use of formal and informal services.

Large-scale social and economic issues and challenges in a complex environment of needs, requirements and constraints such as the skewed population structure of developed countries can be approached via design thinking methods and processes (Dorst, 2015; Tamminen, 2016). That is why the FinJap project focuses on care services and the business management of elderly care from social, health care and business management perspectives, and investigates the timely topic of provided care services for the aging populations of Finland and Japan.

Peer-to-peer as a pedagogical learning model

A peer-to-peer (P2P) learning model was used in the project. The model is based on Laurea's Learning by Developing (LbD) pedagogical framework. The LbD framework was developed to integrate learning and development (Raij, K. 2018). The LbD framework is based on five competences: ethics, global thinking, networking, innovativeness and reflection. The goal is to enable students to acquire these competences. (Rauhala, P. 2007).

P2P is a practical implementation of LbD developed to fulfil the above competences. In a P2P project set-up, a team of students work on a real-life project assigned by an external client. The lecturer's responsibility is to ensure that the targets set by the client and the students' learning targets match. The client can be a company or a public sector organization. A typical project role setting is presented in figure 1.

The FinJap project's client is Asia Programme - Education Cooperation and Asia programme, and the team consists of the Finnish and Japanese students, as well as lecturers and professors from the respective countries. The FinJap project's overall target is to investigate elderly care service structures and financing in Finland and Japan. The overall target was divided into four sub-targets in which more detailed tasks were identified. The students received a briefing of the key practical assignment. In the FinJap project, the project cycle includes different practical assignments during two academic semesters. The assignments are designed to fulfil project-specific targets.

In the P2P model, a project is finalized during one academic semester, starting with a project briefing and ending in the evaluation and presentation of

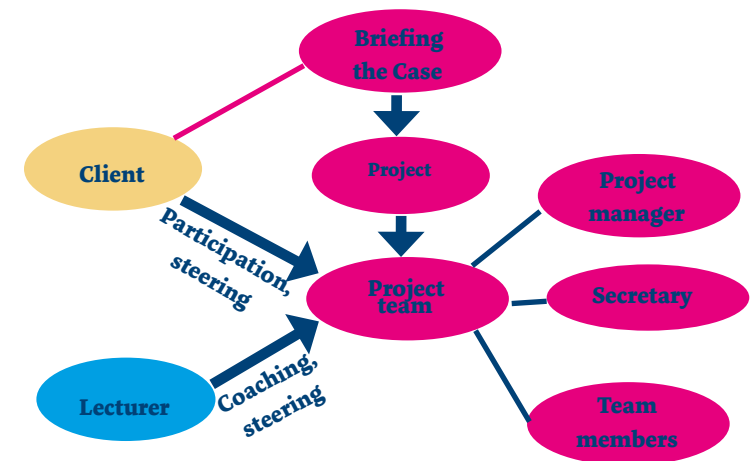


Figure 1: Project team roles (Airaksinen, P. 2018)

the results. A typical project follows "The Project Cycle" presented in figure 2. The four main phases of the project cycle are planning, theoretical studies, practical tasks and reporting. It is vital to note that the theoretical studies are closely connected to the project's practical tasks. This enables students to build a theoretical framework based on the project tasks and ensures that the project targets are achieved using a learning model that combines theoretical knowledge with practice.

As part of the project studies, the students not only develop their theoretical knowledge, but also their meta-skills such as problem solving, group-working, social skills, client-relationship management, critical thinking and reflection skills (Ojasalo, K. 2018). These skills have been identified as being essential to closing the

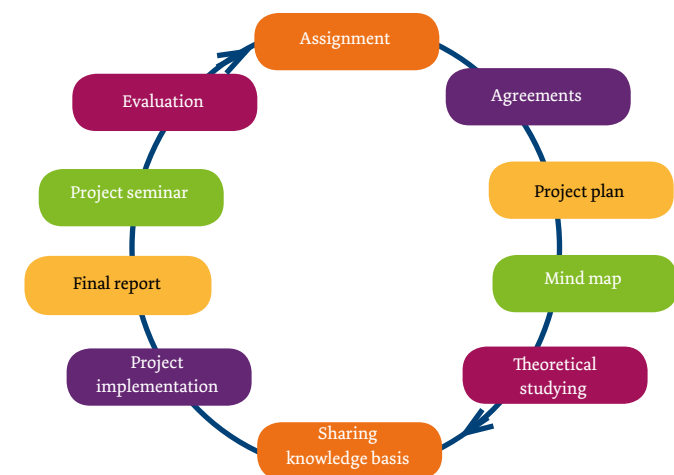


Figure 2: Project cycle (Airaksinen, P. 2018)

“business-reality” gap between higher education and working life (Dickinson, P., Haavisto, P. 2018).

The P2P learning model has been used in international collaboration projects by student teams from, for example, Russian and Chinese universities. To date, multiple project assignments from international clients and about 300 projects, including international exchange students, have been part of the Business Management Studies programme at the Laurea Hyvinkää Campus. The experiences of international students with regard to the P2P learning model have also been studied by Dickinson (2017), who concludes that P2P model fulfils the five LbD competences from an international perspective. In the FinJap project, the P2P model is used for the first time in an international multidisciplinary project assignment. During the project, students and teachers have encountered various challenges, with probably the biggest one being the teacher-student relationship. P2P requires the teacher to “step down” from a traditional role of “knowledge owner” and be part of a team in endeavoring new topics and phenomena. This challenges not only the teachers’ expectations and attitudes, but also those of the students who expect “correct answers” from the teachers. The project participants’ roles must be communicated frequently inside the project group and the participants need to act according to their assigned roles. This requirement applies to teachers in particular.

Using different pedagogical frameworks for learning

The multilayered collaborative learning framework consists of a common analytical framework and benchmarking of social situations and elderly care services. The collaborative learning process emphasizes the importance of students learning from one another’s experiences of elderly care services and the role of economic factors in care services. This learning approach enables students to acquire a more in-depth understanding of new service development perspectives for a super-aged society.

The project’s pedagogical framework was based on a cooperative learning approach combined with service design methods (Ashman & Gillies, 2003). Cooperative learning experiences enabled learning in virtual and face-to-face interaction in groups and pairs. In addition, socialization and friendships provided peer support that reinforced the students’ learning (Ibid.). Four fictive personas, two Japanese and two Finnish elderly persons, were co-created in a common face-to-face workshop. The personas enabled the project team to study the everyday life of the elderly more effectively without violating anyone’s privacy.

The students made a PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal) analysis of both countries. The analyses provided background information for the students to create the fictive personas for the project. The students also planned a typical week schedule for the personas, which enabled them to better understand elderly care systems in Japan and Finland – this being one of the principal goals of the FinJap project. In fact, the PESTEL analyses served

as a pedagogical method that enhanced the students’ understanding of Japanese and Finnish care systems and helped them apply the newly acquired knowledge and insights to practical challenges. The students also learned to interact in an international context more effectively. The students will continue to develop these personas even further, and in that way deepen their understanding of elderly care systems in Japan and Finland. The teachers’ role was to ensure the progress of the entire project. They also supported and supervised the students’ work by participating in the PESTEL analysis work and the development of the fictive personas. In addition, the teachers reviewed the PESTEL analysis from different perspectives, as well as provided feedback on student presentations and reflections. Constructive teacher-student discussions played a major role in the learning process.

Learning by observing the elderly

Observation is an important method in the study of elderly care alongside theoretical and analytical approaches. The FinJap project enabled the Finnish team to visit Japan and the Japanese team to visit Finland. The partnership forged between the higher education institutions in Finland and Japan also enabled joint fieldwork and visits to authentic elderly care environments. This resulted in an unparalleled educational outcome.

The students visited and observed elderly care facilities in Japan and Finland. They also interviewed the elderly and care service experts. In Japan, the project team visited a nursing care home, a day care center, a health promotion center, and a private sector institution for the elderly. In Finland, the project team visited a day care center, a residential care home managed by an NGO, and a care home managed by a private company. Visiting established care facilities provided information that could not be found in books or online. It was also important to hear the thoughts and opinions of the elderly and care providers. By interviewing the elderly, the students gained a better understanding of how the elderly perceive care services. The observation-centered approach also allowed students to study other topics, such as excess and deficiency in care services, overall service quality, and the usability of robotics and devices in elderly care. In other words, the interviews with the elderly and care personnel were an exciting opportunity for the students to broaden their understanding.

This quote provides an insight into how students experienced the interviews:

This project is quite different from other projects. One of the huge differences is a common language. We all have to speak, write and understand in English. This is why there are surely many things, we could not do. So, when we challenge [sic], we fail at many times. However, we can learn so many things from those failures. No one can do without any failure.

One of the guiding ideas behind the FinJap project has been the importance of learning from one another as an effective way to address the challenge of a rapidly aging population. This spirit of cooperation has provided a more nuanced and in-depth

understanding of elderly care and societal change in Finland and Japan. It has also strengthened the students' learning skills via multinational and multiprofessional teamwork as well as improved English-language proficiency. The FinJap project has enabled participants to understand the differences and similarities between the two countries and created a strong foundation for future cooperation.



Picture: Kenichi Kudo

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Elin Andersson

INCOMING INTERNATIONAL LECTURERS – ADDED BENEFIT FOR A SMALLER CAMPUS?

The Finnish education system has long recognised the need to focus on the quality of education. This includes the internationalisation of higher education (Pyykkö 2009, 53). However, internationalisation is not always easy and requires resources, something that a smaller campus does not always have. This article discusses the benefits of incoming international staff to a smaller campus and how the guests contribute to its internationalisation. Much of what follows is based on student and staff interviews done at Haaga-Helia's Porvoo campus, supported by Finnish and international literature on internationalisation.

Porvoo campus is one of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences' five campuses and has some 1100 students and some 55 staff, including both administrative staff and lecturers. Every year the campus welcomes some 50 incoming guest lecturers and visitors, who greatly contribute to the internationalisation of the campus. Becoming an internationally active campus takes time and effort, but the benefits usually outweigh the challenges.

The challenges in implementing internationalisation

Being a smaller campus may mean facing different challenges than a larger campus. One of these challenges is recruitment. Many of the staff members on Porvoo

campus are expected to teach in both Finnish and English. This limits the opportunity to welcome staff who do not know the local language. The campus has at the moment several international lecturers working full time, but there is a limit to the amount of courses offered in English.

Then there is the question of input and development. A limited amount of staff also limits the amount of new input and development ideas, which was pointed out by one of the interviewed staff members. It also limits what sort of courses the lecturers can offer the students.

In the interviews, it also became apparent that not all staff members feel like they have time to develop international networks. As the Erasmus+ Higher Education Impact Study points out (European Commission 2019, 5, 120), family reasons and personal relationships as well as workplace responsibilities are the main reasons for not participating in internationalisation, with many feeling that there is a lack of time and opportunity. This means that responsibility for developing international networks is divided among a fewer number of staff, which is something that should be considered in the overall workload (interview with one of the program directors).

Being known internationally and attracting incoming lecturers are in themselves a distinct challenge for smaller countries and universities. Making yourself known on the international arena and getting the interest of potential partners and international students requires time and effort (Loonurm 2014).

How to attract international lecturers

The establishment of fruitful international relations requires a goal-oriented approach and dedication. Some of the first international contacts at Porvoo campus were made years ago and have continued to blossom. The staff have long been actively participating in different networks and teacher exchange, as well as hosting meetings and incoming lecturers. All to make the campus well known. This has also meant defining and focusing on what makes us unique. Having a distinctly different pedagogical approach has had its benefits as has an increase in interest in the Finnish education system in general and Haaga-Helia in particular, as pointed out by one of the interviewed international staff members of the campus. This opinion was seconded in interviews with incoming lecturers who visited the campus recently.

All this demands resources and prioritising, as noted before. This type of activity also requires support from directors, who also have to see the long-time benefits this brings to the campus.

At Haaga-Helia, the focus is on creating partnerships where all parties have similar visions and shared interests. Finding the “right” partners is not always enough, however. It is also important to learn to know colleagues from the partner institution on

a more personal level. This was underlined in the interview with one of the program directors (who was one of the first to initiate international cooperation at the campus). “You have to invest in people, and the best ideas and discussions do not always come in the meeting room, but over dinner and a glass of wine,” she said. One of the more frequent visiting lecturers agrees, and added that he always feels very welcome and that the campus staff always takes notice of him, with the result that he is well integrated to the work done on the campus.

In addition to hospitality, flexibility is also needed and here the small campus has its benefits. Having a smaller organisation usually means being able to make changes more rapidly and adapting to new things (Loonurm 2014). As a staff member put it: “I would prefer to be able to plan all incoming lecture visits long in advance, but sometimes these visits come on short notice. However these ad hoc visits can lead to some valuable contacts. Therefore we try to also welcome guests on short notice.”

The benefits incoming lecturers brings to campus

Strong international cooperation is a way of ensuring the quality and innovation of education (The Institutional Repository Valto 2017). This is supported by interviews with staff, who concluded that by bringing in international lecturers and working on joint course projects, a smaller campus can grow its pool of experts, especially because the recruiting international staff is limited. In the end, the high quality of teaching also ensures student recruitment both internationally and nationally, something that is vital for a smaller campus (Sotamaa 2009, 80-81).

Current students also recognise this and some of the students in the English-speaking programmes pointed out that their future careers will most likely be international and having incoming lecturers teaching them on a regular basis brings along the international perspective they need for their future careers. The students that study in the Finnish-speaking programmes agreed with this perspective and added that the opportunity to practice English skills in an international classroom is a great benefit. This is especially important for students who do not take an exchange period abroad (Leggott & Stapleford 2007, 120-121; Weimer, Hoffman & Silvonen 2019, 46).

Welcoming incoming lecturers also gives the staff the possibility for professional development, even if they themselves do not have the possibility to attend conferences or visit institutions abroad. As one of the lecturers who so far hasn't gone on exchange put it: “By hosting an incoming lecturer I got a lot of new ideas and practical examples to use with my students. We are also currently working on a joint course project for our students so his visit was really beneficial for the both of us.” One international staff member noted in an interview that if the campus wasn't so internationally active he might have had to move elsewhere for professional growth.

In conclusion

According to our experience welcoming international staff has many positive effects. These can be crucial to a campus of smaller size in a location that is perhaps not so well known. Having a good network of international partners and welcoming many international guests enables the exchange of the latest knowledge and expertise and gives the opportunity to create new ideas in a larger community. These contribute to the quality of education. They also supports the professional development of staff and ensures that students get an opportunity for internationalisation also at home.

Building an active international network takes determined work and input from the staff, as many of the connections are built not only on partnership agreements, but also on personal contacts. It means recognising what the partner has to offer and finding that unique market edge, as well as recognising the importance of international networking in one's daily work.

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Minna Kaihovirta & Rick Maijer

INTERNATIONAL STUDY TRIPS – WHY AND WHAT FOR?

Metropolia Master's Students Gaining Knowledge on European Decision-Making Processes in Collaboration with Zuyd

It was more than I hoped for, commented one of the students after visiting our partner university in the Netherlands. “I got to learn so much more than I would have only by reading about the decision-making process in the EU, but more importantly, I formed new friendships and built my professional network, which will be a great asset for me in my worklife”.

The driving force behind most lecturers is willingness to make a difference. Not only to introduce learners to new theoretical information, but to enable them to gain experience and widen their networks. Whenever I manage to create a wow-level learning experience for my students, I feel deeply satisfied with the career choice that I have made. With this one study trip we, my colleague Rick and me, have managed to create this wow and in this article we share some of our experiences. Hopefully this will encourage others to look for new kind of international collaboration possibilities.

Finland as part of EU

Seen from Finnish perspective the European Union with its institutions may seem rather distant. Finns have just elected our new Members for the Parliament, but the connection between everyday life and EU level decision making process can feel

quite weak. In higher education, it is important to look beyond the scope of your own country and engage in international activities. This is one of the learning outcomes that we aim at in UAS degree programmes and as a lecturers we need to try ways for doing this.

Since mid-1990's, Finland has become increasingly diverse as a result of international migration. And Finland is not alone here. According to Saukkonen, a somewhat similar situation appears almost everywhere in Europe. He says that societies are nowadays heterogeneous units, some of them even super-diverse because of the number and complexity of differences. There is a great need to find solutions in the different spheres of society, legal, political and symbolic, to give room for diversity while maintaining a sufficient degree of unity. (Saukkonen 2018, 71.) This development, in particular, has increased the urgency to further construct also education in terms of diversity and cultural competence. This development can be seen in UAS curricula development. Despite the degree programme, topics such as diversity and intercultural competence are included in the curricula.

In order to build the student's cultural competence in higher education, both theory and practice are needed. Theory is easy - there's always Google and books and libraries. However, putting the theory into practice is not always that easy, especially for the Master's students studying at a UAS in Finland as most of them work full time and study part time. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, the challenge is a bit different; the younger students sometimes take internationalisation as something that is very common and do not necessarily see any need for paying attention to it. International partnerships in higher education can provide a great way to turn these challenges into opportunities. This article shares one practical example of collaboration between a Finnish UAS, Metropolia, and its partner university Zuyd UAS in Maastricht, the Netherlands.

Unique concept for study trip based on co-operation

Metropolia, as one of the most international universities of applied sciences in Finland, aims at providing its students with various possibilities for increasing their understanding about diversity and strengthening their cultural competence, both in theory and in practice. Internationalisation, both abroad and at home, is at the heart of Metropolia's operations. The activities range from international degree programmes to study and work placement opportunities abroad. However, for the Master's students these opportunities are not always possible. Fulltime work and family commitments alongside studies make it hard enough as it is to juggle everyday life. Spending a semester studying or working abroad can seem an overwhelming and impossible challenge. Metropolia started to tackle this challenge actively some years ago. Short, one-week study trips to partner universities seemed to provide a good and feasible possibility for the Master's students to engage in international activities. In fact, in 2017 it was decided that all Metropolia Master's degree programmes should include a study trip abroad in their curricula.

A course on Personal Development is part of the first year studies in the Master's Degree Programme in Business Development at Metropolia. The learning objectives for the course include strengthening the students' networking skills and cultural competence. The students come from very diverse backgrounds and it was not a simple decision to choose the destination and the theme for the mandatory study trip abroad. As a lecturer I also wanted this study trip to be something special, something that students would want to participate in order to gain experience that they would not be able to get elsewhere.

The study trip concept for the business students was created in co-operation with Metropolia's partner Zuyd UAS, based in Maastricht, Netherlands. The purpose of the study trip is two-fold. On the one hand, the focus is on internationalisation, intercultural experiences and networking, and on the other hand, on strengthening the students' understanding of the EU decision-making processes in order to improve their skills in influencing and participating in public affairs.

In practice this means that during the study trip, the Metropolia Master's students are offered an intensive introduction to the decision-making processes in the EU. This takes place in Zuyd's Maastricht Campus. Later, a group of Dutch students studying European Studies at Zuyd join the Finnish students for a networking session. The student groups also travel together to Brussels for a two-day field trip where guest lecturers discuss lobbying, policy and public affairs. The study trip ends with a visit to Businesses Europe and, as a highlight, the European Parliament.

Students with different levels of knowledge - what to do?

In this study trip, two very different groups of students are being brought together. The other group are the students in the European Studies and the other one studying their Master's degree in Business Development, with typically only basic knowledge on EU institutions and decision-making processes. This is not an easy situation to begin with, but applies for many co-operation projects. We came out with solutions to balance and even out the different backgrounds of students.

To bridge the gap in EU knowledge between the two groups, the Finnish Master's students received a crash course on EU decision-making process and policies so that they would have a better understanding and could place the guest speakers in Brussels in the right context. In the Degree Programme of European Studies at Zuyd UAS, the students study these topics in a practical manner for four years.

As lecturer of European Public Affairs at Zuyd, Rick introduced the topic to the Finnish students. He explained the practice about lobbying and public affairs, and why it is relevant to engage in it at the EU level. The European Union has exclusive and shared competences in numerous policy areas. This makes it apparent for students studying EU decision-making process. (Article 3 TFEU; Article 4 TFEU.)

After the introduction of the presidencies of the EU institutions, the four integral institutions affecting the decision-making process in the EU were explained in more detail, so that it became clear what the roles and responsibilities of each institution are and how they are involved in the Ordinary Legislative Procedure, the main decision-making process of the EU.

It was explained that lobbying is a natural process, which is mostly appreciated by the public officials in the EU institutions as they are quite open to lobbyists and are actually keen on exchanging information as it is regarded as a way of forming better policies.

Dutch students aiming for a career in the EU

In the first years, the training at Zuyd is more knowledge based, much like the crash course previously described. However, along the way the students receive assignments in which they have to apply that knowledge. They receive small assignments e.g. to research all relevant public officials of the EU institutions on a specific legislative proposal. In this way, the students familiarize themselves with the EU institutions online and find out e.g. which political groups in the European Parliament are in favour or against a legislative proposal. In the third and fourth years of the European Studies programme, the students need to develop a lobbying and public affairs strategy, first in a group setting and then alone, for a potential client on a specific legislative proposal or policy development.

Either in a project setting or as a minor, the students receive specialized classes on the EU's decision-making processes during which not only the ordinary legislative procedure is explained in detail, but also the adoption of international (trade) agreements, the EU budget and comitology. Students have to research existing as well as proposed legislation, what effect it might have on a certain client (e.g. a private company, an NGO or a European association), who all the stakeholders involved are (decision-makers as well as other companies, NGOs and association or trade unions) and what their positions on the matter are. After the research, students would first need to assess their SMART objectives and then follow up with advice and an action plan. Here you can see the strength of Applied Sciences programmes where students actually apply their knowledge during the programme and finish it with an internship. Approximately every ten students of Zuyd pursue an internship in the Brussels bubble.

Networking skills and career orientation - a common ground for both groups

In addition to building the students' understanding of the EU decision-making processes, the study trip aims at strengthening the students' networking skills and intercultural communication skills. During the session, both Finnish and Dutch students get to interact with each other by an exercise lead by Minna. Training how to

network can be done in various ways and with different types of exercises. However, networking is something that you only learn by practicing.

The Finnish Business Development students are in the middle of their professional careers. A number of them see studies as a way to move forward in their career. They do have the relevant experience, but lack knowledge on the EU decision-making processes. The Dutch students are in the early stages of their professional career, with little work experience from their own field. Since they are studying European Studies, they do know a lot on the topic. Making these two groups interact and network is beneficial for all. For the Dutch students this was a good practice for engaging and networking externally and for the Finnish students to practice it in an international setting.

Increasingly, changes in workplace cultures are leading to recognition of the importance of building trust and common ground through informal communication and the value of this for companies or organizations in sharing knowledge. Pullin also argues that a number of studies on workplace needs and employers' wishes concerning communication skills have shown that whereas the little training that is given in communication skills often focuses on areas such as formal presentations, the communication skills required in the workplace are far more varied. (Pullin 2010, 456.) On this study trip, the need for more informal training was recognized.



The group from December 2018 visit to European Parliament. Picture: Zuyd.

Why go on a field trip?

At this point, both groups of students have at least basic knowledge on EU institutions. Now it would be interesting to hear what kind influence lobbyists can actually have on the decision-making processes. To make it more tangible - where else to go than to Brussels?

The whole group travelled to Brussels for two days that were filled with guest speakers. The guest speakers on both days were selected because of their expertise and the different angles of lobbying. There were two guest speakers of Public Affairs consultancies (Grayling and Europa Insights). These consultancies are hired by clients in order to support them and provide them with lobbying services. Two guest speakers were representatives from private companies (Bayer and KLM). Here you could clearly understand that their lobbying activities are usually more focused on specific policies whereas a consultant at a PA consultancy usually covers more policy areas. The fifth speaker was a consultant from a European Association (Insurance Europe) and here it became clear that the consultant not only engages in external lobbying (i.e. the EU institutions), but also internal lobbying which entails making sure to get its member's opinions aligned.

One of the perceptions on lobbying is that it includes wining and dining. This perception is not entirely untrue and, hence, could not be missing from the programme. The evening programme, therefore, continued with an dinner for the two groups of students, their accompanied lecturers and of course the lobbyists. In Finland students do not often get a chance to interact with guest speakers in an informal setting, so this was a successful way of putting networking skills into practice. Many students from both groups named this dinner as one of the highlights of the study trip.

On the last day, the group went first to Business Europe, the European Association for Business Representation in the EU. Business Europe has a wide variety of national business associations as its members. In addition, here it became apparent the internal communication and getting the member associations aligned was a large part of the job. Business Europe is one of the associations that, because of its numbers of members, has a strong voice in European decision-making.

The last visit of the field trip was to the European Parliament. Here Belgian Member of European Parliament (MEP) together with her Office Manager (Alumnus of Zuyd) talked about their policy areas. They also confirmed that input from different angles of society is necessary for them to form the best possible opinion on certain policy developments. During to the visit to the hemi-cycle in the European Parliament the group more informally discussed the day-to-day work. The visit to the Parliament summed the content of the study trip.



Visiting European Parliament, from left to right Rick Maijer, Simone Bours, Mickèl Magnus, Minna Kaihovirta, Lieve Wierinck, Luis Alfredo Perez Salazar. Picture: Zuyd.

The benefits for the involved parties

As result, the Finnish Masters' students now know more about the EU-level decision-making processes and have expanded their own professional network. The Dutch students have now a better understanding of how the profession is conducted in reality, explored internship opportunities and likewise grown their own professional network. And we, the lecturers, can enjoy both the process of organising the trip and also the learning outcome.

One Finnish Master's student, who participated in the trip summed up the experience: "I was hoping to learn more about the decision-making in the EU and to get new experiences. We got to hear experts sharing their first hand experiences in the work of commission and the parliament, and also in public affairs and lobbying. Only now I understand how important it is to understand these mechanisms. These topics should be mandatory for all Finns in order to understand that we do have a say on these decisions that shape our society."

One of the Dutch European Studies students said "The speakers were extremely interesting, and it was really nice to hear about what it is like to truly work as a Public Affairs Manager in Brussels. I tried to get as many business cards from the speakers which went very well. All in all, it was an amazing trip, the people we met and the information we received was very useful and educational."

It is crucial that the European UAS's co-operate in different ways. For Metropolia UAS it is a great advantage to have Zuyd UAS as a partner. After three rounds and fine-tuning the study trip, the concept is now considered to be very valuable for all

parties. The participating students as well as the participating guest speakers have confirmed this. Together we, as the organizing universities, are able to offer our students experiences that would otherwise be out of reach.

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Jukka Ojasalo & Virpi Kaartti

MULTIDISCIPLINARY BOOTCAMP FOR MASTER'S STUDENTS IN CERN IDEASQUARE

This paper describes the development, organization and implementation of a multidisciplinary bootcamp concept with master's students in CERN Ideasquare Geneva Switzerland. CERN is the European Organization for Nuclear Research. The concept was developed to enhance master's students' opportunities for internationalisation. There was an evident need to develop a new pedagogic concept for this purpose as most of the master's students in universities of applied sciences are studying alongside their full-time jobs, thus having limited opportunities for learning in an international environment during their degree studies. The developed concept is based on the idea that the master's degree students participating in the bootcamp solve demanding societal problems and challenges in multidisciplinary teams in CERN with design thinking philosophy and co-creative service design methods in the guidance of supervisors from the arranging universities and with the support from the CERN community. The paper describes the main activities, outcomes, learnings, and the collaborative network in developing and carrying out the CERN bootcamp concept. The network included 3 UAS consortium Haaga-Helia, Laurea, Metropolia, and the University of Helsinki HIP Helsinki Institute of Physics, and Ideasquare team in CERN.

International mobility of students in studying in master's programs is a clear challenge, especially at universities of applied sciences. Often, students in master's degree programmes are studying alongside their full-time jobs and many of them

have families. While many students would be interested in international mobility, their chances are limited, particularly for longer mobility periods. Nevertheless, the requirements of working life in the globalizing world set increasing expectations for internationalisation in life-long learning. However, as students in master's programmes have full-time jobs along with their studies, they have almost non-existent opportunities to participate in regular student exchange programmes. This is because the minimum duration for an exchange period is too long. Indeed, students studying in master's degree programmes require different approaches to internationalisation.

The problem was addressed by developing a new boot camp course that is partly carried out in CERN Geneva Switzerland. The collaboration started through the personal contacts of Laurea's instructors with CERN personnel. Even though CERN's main mission is to do fundamental research of particle physics, it is also involved in various other activities. They cover advancing the frontiers of technology, bringing nations together through science, knowledge transfer, and offering various educational programmes to tomorrow's scientists and engineers covering all ages from high-school students to university students. As part of these activities, the concept of CERN Ideasquare brings together people to generate new ideas and work on conceptual prototypes related to detection and imaging in an open environment. The facilities of Ideasquare are located on the CERN campus. Ideasquare connects people to accelerate ideas through collaboration, R&D prototyping, and experimental innovation. Ideasquare enhances thinking, doing, and collaborating. Thinking is advanced by exploring innovation methodologies that support divergent research, problem reframing, and iterative testing. Doing entails developing and testing ideas by taking advantage of their machine workshop, electrical workshop, 3D printer, light lab, and virtual reality equipment for rapid prototyping. Collaborating is facilitated with collaborative activities like challenge-based innovation, hackathons or workshops. The CERN bootcamp course is an example of such innovative collaboration.

CERN Bootcamp

The CERN Bootcamp is an all-year round project including planning, implementation and assessment. It is a joint effort between the 3 UAS consortium Haaga-Helia, Laurea, Metropolia, and the University of Helsinki HIP Helsinki Institute of Physics, and Ideasquare team at CERN Geneva. An extensive multidisciplinary and international group of professionals participate in planning and implementing the Bootcamp, consisting of five supervisors from the Finnish consortium, five mentors from CERN Ideasquare, as well as one coordinator from Finland and CERN Ideasquare. In total, the core team consists of 12 persons. In addition, several administrative and supporting persons help in the process. Next, we explain how the implementation and development of the CERN Bootcamp is organized.

The implementation cycle of the course starts immediately after the previous implementation is over. This takes place in late summer or early autumn when the

feedback from the earlier course implementation has been analyzed, the students have been received their credits, and the total results are summarized and reported. The application for the funding of the next year's Bootcamp is then prepared. If the funding is granted, the timetable for the next year is agreed with CERN and preliminary reservations are done to Ideasquare premises as well as for the accommodation and flights. This is followed by the planning of marketing, *challenges* for student projects, and the detailed planning of implementation.

Firstly, the *challenges* for each implementation are identified. This takes place jointly with the supervisors, CERN Ideasquare mentors, and the stakeholders of CERN. The *challenges* are aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2019). The *challenges* are typically wicked problems, such as climate change, pollution of seas, integration of refugees, and health and well-being issues. Wicked problems have the following characteristics (Rittel & Webber, 1973; Camillus, 2008):

- *There is no definitive formulation of a wicked problem.* It is not possible to write a well-defined statement of the problem, as can be done with a tamed problem.
- *Wicked problems have no stopping rule.* It is possible to tell when a solution is reached with a tame problem. With a wicked problem, the search for solutions never stops.
- *Solutions to wicked problems are not true-or-false, but good-or-bad.* Tame problems have solutions that can be objectively evaluated as right or wrong. Choosing a solution to a wicked problem is largely a matter of judgment.
- *There is no immediate and no ultimate test of a solution to a wicked problem.* It is possible to easily determine if a solution to an ordinary problem is working. However, solutions to wicked problems generate unexpected consequences over time, making it difficult to measure their effectiveness.
- *Every solution to a wicked problem is a "one-shot operation"; because there is no opportunity to learn by trial-and-error, every attempt counts significantly.* Solutions to tame problems can be easily tried and abandoned. In opposite, with wicked problems, every implemented solution has consequences that cannot be undone.
- *Wicked problems do not have an enumerable (or an exhaustively describable) set of potential solutions, nor is there a well-described set of permissible operations that may be incorporated into the plan.* By contrast, ordinary problems come with a limited set of potential solutions.
- *Every wicked problem is essentially unique.* A tame problem belongs to a class of similar problems that are all solved in the same way. In contrast, a wicked problem is substantially without precedent; experience does not help to address it.

- *Every wicked problem can be considered to be a symptom of another problem.* While a tame ordinary problem is self-contained, a wicked problem is entwined with other problems. Those problems do not have one root cause.
- *The existence of a discrepancy representing a wicked problem can be explained in numerous ways. The choice of explanation determines the nature of the problem's resolution.* A wicked problem involves many stakeholders, and they all have different ideas about what the problem really is and what its causes are.
- *The planner has no right to be wrong.* Problem solvers dealing with a wicked problems are held liable for the consequences of any actions they take, because those actions will have such a large impact and are hard to justify (Rittel & Webber, 1973; Camillus, 2008)

Once the *challenges* are jointly identified, specified, and agreed, they are communicated to potential applicant through marketing. Students apply to the Bootcamp by carefully motivating and explaining their interest in the challenges communicated to them. Based on the application and the success in the earlier studies, selected students are invited to group discussions to further assess them for the final selection. The multidisciplinary nature of student groups is also considered in the selection process. Max. 25 students are selected for the Cern Bootcamp.

Service design approach is applied when solving the societal *challenges*. According to Foglieni et al. (2018), the service design approach is "a fundamental element for introducing change in business, organisations and the public sector." Furthermore, it is a holistic approach, taking the system point of view and integrating several areas of expertise through design-led approaches, methods and tools (Mager & Sung, 2011; Patrício et al., 2018). The students typically explore their *challenges* in terms of the following phases: 1) define the problem, 2) ideate solutions, 3) prototype, 4) test and 5) present the solution and assess its impact.

From the perspective of the selected students, the CERN Bootcamp journey starts with an individual pre-assignment. In the pre-assignment, they get familiar with service design and how to work during a short-term, intensive program aiming at solving wicked problems. This method is often called a sprint (Knapp, Zeratsky & Kowitz, 2016). Thereafter, students get together for the kick-off event for two days. This is the first time when all the parties: students and supervisors from Haaga-Helia, Laurea, Metropolia, and the University of Helsinki HIP, and mentors from CERN Ideasquare meet each other. The main content of the kick-off days focuses on getting to know each other, choosing the *challenge* and creating the student groups accordingly, learning how CERN and its stakeholders can support the development task, finding the viewpoint to study the selected *challenge* further, preparing a plan to gather data, and agreeing on the expert interviews. The data collection begins immediately after the kick-off and continues until the end of Bootcamp at CERN Geneva. At CERN and in the Geneva area, students can interview scientists

and experts of international organizations, such as United Nations, World Health Organization, Red Cross and many others. The first two days at the Bootcamp focus on data gathering, analyzing, learning, and creating insights in the *challenge*. The students then move on to the ideation phase, which addresses the question, what kind of solutions could solve the identified problem? The best ideas are prototyped and live tested. The ideas are then finalized. At this point, the ideas' societal impact is also assessed. The solution and the impact are presented in the last afternoon of the Bootcamp. Afterwards, there is still one task in the students' journey, which is the learning diary. In addition to internationalisation competences, such as cultural and communication skills, students learn to apply service design approaches and basic tools to develop sustainable solutions; recognize opportunities to solve societal problems with social innovation and understand their impact; act as a developer in open innovation networks and environments; and conceptualize and commercialize services. The feedback is gathered from the students both orally and through a questionnaire. Supervisors and mentors from CERN discuss about their views and experiences of the implementation after the Bootcamp, and again when the student feedback has been analyzed. This is the moment when the next implementation cycle starts.

Discussion and learnings

The implementation of the CERN Bootcamp differs significantly from a typical classroom implementation, which takes place in the university's own premises. It also requires considerably more man-hours from the organizing instructors. The implementation and organization stage of the project is carried out in multi-stakeholder network in the two countries. The collaboration between the participating universities also provides various advantages and benefits.

Key CERN Bootcamp results and takeaways:

- Excellent student feedback. The average overall grade was 4,48 (with scale 1..5). The feedback also shows that the learning environment, CERN Ideasquare, offers a great learning experience and a pleasant and encouraging working environment. Furthermore, students value the opportunity to broaden their networks.
- The CERN Bootcamp concept provides master's degree students who are working full-time alongside their studies an effective way to achieve internationalisation goals in a short but intensive period of time.
- An opportunity for broad multidisciplinary with student groups, more viewpoints in ideation for and development of the bootcamp, stronger funding base for organizing the bootcamp, as well as synergies with the practicalities.
- The CERN Bootcamp enables participants to address the United Nation's sustainable development goals in education and creative problem solving.

- The bootcamp also enables participants to demonstrate and communicate experiences of multi-actor and multidisciplinary co-creation activity in an open innovation environment, which is a central element of each partner's strategic intent and pedagogic philosophy.

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Mia Ruismäki & Miika Kuivikko

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD WEEK

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (UAS) and [Avans UAS](#) in the Netherlands have had a good academic relationship since late 1990s'. Closer cooperation between these particular programmed started in 2012. The exchange programs have been popular, with up to 12 staff members joining the partnership UAS for a brief period of time.

The subjects of these exchange programs have mostly concerned environmental and forensic sciences. The Field Week that has been organised for the third year students every autumn semester since 2015, has been the most visible and popular part of the cooperation. Short-term exchange gives students an opportunity to internationalize in a shorter time and this enable student with a different life situation to have an exchange experience.

Programs “Laboratory Sciences” (Metropolia UAS) and “Environmental Sciences For Sustainable Energy and Technology” (ESSET, Avans UAS) have different curricula and expertise. Finnish students and staff are especially skilled in getting reliable results from analysis, whereas Dutch students are often able to put two and two together visually and make, for example, ArcGIS maps from results. ArcGIS is a geographic information system for working with maps and geographic information, and it is used for creating and using maps, compiling geographic data, and analyzing mapped information.

Versatile learning programme

During the Field Week, groups of students and staff have had the opportunity to choose a 1 ECTS unit either in the Netherlands or in Finland. Last autumn [Tampere University of Applied Sciences](#) joined the Field Week, and therefore autumn 2018 students and staff were able to choose between three different locations: Helsinki, Tampere and Breda.

Before the Field Week all students have studied two online courses using Moodle learning platform: “Sampling and Chemical Analysis of Aquatic Environment 1 ECTS” and “Sampling and Chemical Analysis Contaminated Soil 1 ECTS”. The responsibility of developing these learning materials and quizzes for the online courses have been shared between Finnish universities of applied sciences – thus we all have been able to save resources. The student enrollment to the Moodle platform has been smooth and the students have been able to perform the course assignments well, even though the Dutch students have not been familiar with the Moodle learning platform before. These online courses have been a relevant orientation for the students before the Field Week. At Metropolia, online courses and Field Week are included in the 10 ECTS Environmental Analysis module.

During these years, the Field Week has seen various forms of reporting and sharing information. Poster sessions have remained the most popular choice, but [blogs](#) and Youtube videos have also gained popularity, as they give the students the freedom to use and show their own creativity.

Field Week in Helsinki

During the Field Week in Helsinki, the students have studied the Baltic Sea and the river basin area. They have analysed varied soil samples for example from the Harakka Island and the river Vantaa. The Field Week has drawn participants from Metropolia, Avans and the City of Helsinki with 50 students and 4-5 staff members. The Helsinki Field Week has most often been kicked off with an orientation lecture, in which the students form study groups of 5-6 participants, and each are given a research topic. The research topics have been very varied, including bacteria, algae, human activity microplastics and pollutants, heavy metals in soil, PCB in fish, or, for example, the general condition of the oxygen in the sea ecosystem.

After the field week kick-off, the groups have begun their projects outdoors by getting to know the sample sites and planning their sampling and measurement methods. Generally, this has been a new situation for the laboratory sciences students, who are used to working in a lab environment, and have not often participated in the collection phase of the samples they analyse – let alone the whole process of field study.



Principle Lecturer Jukka Niiranen presenting his topic. Picture: Miika Kuivikko



Bonfire event in Harakka Island. Picture: Miika Kuivikko

Another entirely new learning curve for the Finnish students has been the analysing of their obtained results on a bigger scale, and drawing conclusions from them. This has often proved to be the expertise of Dutch student colleagues, who also have experience in Global Information Systems (GIS), which is an excellent tool for visualising results.

With entirely new working methods and new international team members, the Field Week has proven out to be quite an intensive effort for the students. It has never been solely about voluntary activities with exchange students, but there have been some unforgettable moments around bonfires on the Harakka Island as well.

The Field Week has often fallen on the same dates as a major student sports event, Metropolia MetroSport, and this has been included as part of the week, so the students, both foreign and domestic, have been able to participate in some fun and games as well.

Environmental sampling and field analyses take place mainly on the idyllic [Harakka Island](#), former Finnish army chemical laboratory. The island itself is beautiful, and nowadays a place for artists and the City of Helsinki environmental center Nature House. Nature House provides environmental education for school children and teachers, which, in turn, also supports the multidisciplinary approach and sustainable development the Field Week is all about.

To support environmental learning even further, excursions such as Marine research vessel Aranda or Viikinmäki wastewater treatment plant have been included as part of the Field Week program.

The final analyses on the Field Week are mostly carried out in the Degree Programme's own laboratories on campus. Each research team gets to choose how they present their objectives, methodology, and research findings – they can put up a poster exhibition or utilise other digital tools in showcasing their work to other course participants.

Field week in Breda

For the Field Week in Breda, the Finnish students have generally bought themselves suitable flights to the Netherlands and travelled to Breda often combining the Field Week with a short holiday in Amsterdam. Usually they have rented low-priced Airbnb flats in Breda. Metropolia UAS supports each student with a 200 € travel grant. For each Field Week, one teacher from Finland has also taken part.

In the beginning of the Field Week in Breda, the students have formed small groups, and each group has had a different sampling site and environmental analysis project.

The students have been mostly conducting inland dune and river water (River Mark) research. Excursions to waste water plant and dunes in addition to sampling and analysis have made the field week even more interesting. The results of this study week have been presented through a poster session or in the form of a blog – every year the implementation has been different.

In addition to hard work, the Field Week has included extra activities, like bowling and cycling to Belgium for sightseeing. For students it has been fun to spend free time with other international students and be acquainted with a different culture.

Summary

Anderson and Campbell describe the benefits of a short-term exchange (Anderson 2006, 457-469; Campbell 2016, 189-204). Anderson has found four primary objectives for studying abroad and one objective is: "academic or intellectual advanced, which comprise the nurturing of problem solving and language skills in addition to encouraging the acquisition of geographical and historical knowledge" (Anderson 2006, 457-469), our findings and experiences support these findings and they are described in more detail later.

Active partnership is the key for successful teacher and staff exchange. This applies to other courses during the academic year as well. So far the Field Week has fallen on the second week of September and it has been included in the academic curricula, so it doesn't mix students' academic plans.

One of the challenges or possible obstacle has been the expenses especially for the incoming exchange students. Finland is an expensive country and high prices for everything has had an effect for Field Week attendance in Finland. In the future, this problem could be solved by using, for example, a student apartment swap or couch surfing. Lower expenses and lower threshold to participate would also support one of the main key factors of the field week, which is cultural experience.

One of the educational goals of the Field Week has been the whole process of doing practical fieldwork in other word, connecting the gathered data and analyzing the results in order to interpret the current environmental status. The Field Week teaches different ecosystems and how human activity influences everything, everywhere. The students will also learn that whatever the studied environment, the methodology, phenomena, as well as the process of practical field research work will stay the same.

This international Field Week has been a success. Students have been learned environmental analysis outside their classrooms and literally through hands-on projects. For teachers, it has been rewarding to see students rise up to the challenge; to do great team work with international members, and conduct the whole field research process from start to finish with excellent results.

Student feedback on the course has been very encouraging. Not all students have the possibility to participate in a longer student exchange program, and therefore a shorter exchange is a great opportunity to internationalize, network, and gain new experiences and new friends.

"This is always one of the best days of the whole academic year" is the praising comment from a Metropolia staff member, and there have been many similar observations and comments throughout the years. The informal environment also encourages informal collaboration between the students and the staff, supporting trust and making future educational work in Metropolia easier.

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Conrad Lyaruu

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS SUPPORT FINNISH REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Knowledge creation and development are among the key elements in ensuring success in different developmental processes. Regional development and internationalisation cannot be left behind when considering the impact of dynamic capabilities and the multidimensional knowledge among individual actors, institutions and nations.

This article describes the integration of incoming exchange students into the Laurea Learning by Developing learning methodology, and how this supports their academic and professional development as well as the development of Laurea regional partners. Laurea receives annually about 350 incoming exchange students for a semester or an academic year of studies. Most of these students are from Europe. Laurea also receives a fair number of students from Asia, Pacific, Russia and North and South America.

In the Laurea University of Applied Sciences 2020 strategy (2015, 17), regional development has been defined as a “consistent interaction in the region, actively collaborating for the well-being of Uusimaa (region) and its competitive advantage.” Laurea’s partners include companies, public organizations and third-sector actors as well as labor and employer organizations.” In the strategy, closer networking with our international partner institutions as well as the smooth transition from the secondary level to tertiary levels are emphasized. It is for this reason that Laurea must embed all its educational activities in closer relations to the region or municipality that surrounds the institutions. Moreover, all incoming exchange students are involved in similar educational systems in order to support value creation, while

delivering a high-quality education in all study programmes. At the same time, the inclusion of secondary and vocational educational institutions in the Laurea activities supports strategy objectives and creates educational motivation and experiences for all actors.

The pedagogical methodology of Learning by Developing (LbD) used at Laurea supports knowledge creation through the dynamic capabilities of the actors in the learning process. The LbD method infuses the study unit with a practical project. For example, if the course is titled International Marketing and Communication, the course will include a company partner who needs to perfect their marketing communication or develop their international marketing processes. In the LbD structure, students can start different thinking processes related to the phenomenon under investigation, from the selection of relevant theories to the execution phase of the project. Lecturers serve as guiding instructors in the learning process and companies as business partners in the project development stages. The LbD methodology of learning focuses on the study unit requirements and needs in order to fulfil the pedagogical requirements of the curriculum. The LbD method of studying supports creativity and curiosity, as well as encourages students to explore new phenomenon. In most cases this learning approach takes place in shared learning environments.

Although the LbD method of learning is new and often difficult for many incoming exchange students, it has provided many complimentary benefits to the curriculum, students and companies who are partners in the study unit. Many of the incoming students have vast theoretical knowledge on various aspects of studies as they come to Laurea after their first year of studies in their home institutions. Joining Laurea project-based learning environments and studying together with Laurea students create a new perspective for tackling different challenges. The students also provide the partner companies with new ideas and ways of doing businesses and some even develop connections to the companies from the incoming students’ home countries.

Learning applies to all actors

In LbD, learning occurs in three dimensions. Students learn concepts and challenges based on actual company cases and independent work. Lecturers also develop flexible coaching methods as well as introduce new concepts that may not be familiar in Finland. The companies learn to be precise in their needs, while also opening new perspectives for project participants. In three of the Laurea campuses, for example, these implementations last for a semester. If a traditional evaluation method is used to assess student performance, the lecturer evaluates the students’ reports. When peer evaluation is used, student evaluate one another’s work in their groups. Companies also evaluate the student and the results that were brought forward based on the specific needs of the project.

Moreover, the LbD study method has supported knowledge development among the students themselves. This has occurred when the project team comprises students

from different knowledge backgrounds or levels of studies. Laurea receives incoming master's degree students as well, and they have joined groups that consist of bachelor's degree students. Although knowledge levels within the groups vary, the companies involved in the project have benefited from this diversity. In addition, due to the diversity in the group, the bachelor's degree students have learnt from the master's degree students and vice versa. The master's degree students must produce a final report that meets the requirements of their programmes.

The division of tasks and responsibilities in project groups means that there can be various levels of management in the group and each of those functions accounts for a specific study unit. For example, in the marketing project, the student who serves as the project manager is enrolled in a project management or leadership related study unit. His or her job in the group leadership must also be a learning aspect and not only a title. The project manager is also responsible for all the project activities and communications. An exchange student from Switzerland who was a project manager reflected on the project process as follows:

“Our assignment was to develop a new kind of digital service for Customs, which would help leisure time travellers with customs-related questions. At the same time, we determined which matters travellers wanted help with and possible problem that they encounter The project began at the beginning of September 2018 with a meeting with representatives of Customs, which was the partner. In November, the project team gathered at the Hyvinkää campus for its weekly meeting. The final part of the project lies ahead, since it should be ready by the beginning of December 2018... Today we intend to develop three different prototypes of a service, for which we will then ask test users for comments and development proposals We always make a weekly plan outlining what each person has to do next. As the project manager, it's important for me to know that everyone is doing their job so I don't have to check on the team members. Once a week the team meets with supervisors, who help when necessary and check to ensure that the project progresses as agreed.” (Laurea Kehittäjä magazine 1/2018, 15)

Lecturers involved in LbD studies consider the students' ability to take responsibility as the key element in project-based learning. The ability to communicate with partners and find common ground enhances the students' sense of responsibility and encourages them to find better results.

“One of the most important elements of project management studies is for students to learn to take responsibility. From the very start, the students commit to the project and agree on its implementation with the partner” explains Laurea Peer to Peer Business lecturer. (Laurea Kehittäjä magazine 1/2018, 15)

Partnership with effect

Regional development begins with company operators and knowledge creators. Laurea has been able to contribute to the internationalisation of Finnish companies as well as building cooperation or sustainability for partner companies through

projects that integrate incoming exchange students. By including students with different cultural backgrounds in the project group, partner companies benefit from effective local knowledge and language competences. This also improves communication inside the project as team members understand the information related to their company cases. Finnish students in the project group have helped the international students to appreciate language differences and to understand Finnish business etiquette and practices, whereas the exchange students have helped Finnish students to understand how things work in their home countries in relation to the topics covered in their study unit. With these capabilities and with the guidance from the teachers, the students have successfully mapped out solutions that have been beneficial to partner companies.

Thanks to effective partnership with companies, Laurea is seen as a crucial partner for SMEs operating near Laurea's six campuses. Laurea Hyvinkää, for example, has proven to be a good partner for regional companies that need support in the development of business connections with Russia. It also explains why many of Laurea's Russian incoming exchange students prefer to study there, thereby further enhancing the reputation of Laurea Hyvinkää for providing effective support to companies expanding into the Russian market. Tikkurila and Laurea Lohja are also key partners for small and large companies in their respective regions.

Both Laurea and incoming exchange students have found the multicultural project teams to be an excellent option for working with companies, as well as for learning languages and developing own competences. From the international education point of view, diversity and student exchange programmes support the internationalisation at home of local students as they are encouraged to learn about different cultures and business practices, as well as develop crucial language and communication skills. Local students also develop self-esteem and pride in achievement by working with international company partners and colleagues in the projects.

Often the incoming exchange students find this approach to cooperative learning confusing in the beginning, though they later realize that it was one of the best ways of studying. They have managed to work with real-life companies and understand that the competences they are developing during the projects are necessary in working life.

Incoming students also thought that although studying seemed easier than at their home institutions, where studies are mostly theoretical, the LbD method gave them a perspective on actual working life and an understanding of Finnish business practices via the project's partner companies. In addition, the LbD method of learning encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and to seek information independently.

A good illustration of how the LbD method impacts cooperation and learning took place in the fall of 2018, when Laurea students, including incoming exchange students, took part in a competition organised by SMAL, The Association of Finnish

Travel agents. During the project, Laurea cooperated with the Vantaa Vocational College Varia as well as the Tikkurila High school. The group from Laurea was selected as one of the top 5 best winners. A proud business lecturer from Laurea Tikkurila campus described the achievement as follows:

“This is a big annual nationwide competition for students to innovate new tourism services and products. This year the overall theme is Sustainability. Tourism experts of SMAL sit in the jury, which decides upon the winner of MATKA travel fair every January, this year the 18.1. Taking part in the competition was a unique learning experiment itself: Finnish and foreign students from the Vantaa Vocational College Varia, (TILU) Tikkurila high school and Laurea were working in seven diverse teams, aiming to innovate a sustainable tourism services in Vantaa. In the finalist team Laurea’s exchange students Miriam (Germany) and Mohamed (France) with TILU student Weichen (China) conducted a careful background research based on which they created a relaxing nature experience. They made a convincing video of the service, which will be presented shortened at the MATKA fair.”

A company in the city of Lohja also praised three exchange students for their role in developing the company’s HR communication process. At present Lohja Laurea and its exchange students are working for a new wellness resort project in Lohja. In the project they will develop new services for the centre that is scheduled to open in 2021. These and many other examples demonstrate that each of the Laurea programmes has effectively cooperated with local companies and organizations.

Conclusion

LbD has attracted considerable interest from partners, who have repeatedly asked to come and observe its implementations. The regional development that Laurea contributes to through LbD is based on the cooperation structure that is described in this article. Laurea also considers itself to be a knowledge creator as incoming exchange students provide local companies and students with new perspectives and insights. In return, incoming exchange students learn about Finnish culture and business practices from Finnish students and companies. At the same time companies gain new knowledge from incoming exchange students and the incoming exchange students develop their understanding of Finnish working life, while fulfilling their course requirements and gaining new personal and academic competencies from their studies at Laurea.

Moreover, the LbD projects have a significant regional impact. The Laurea campuses provide local communities and companies with publicity, economic opportunities and potential access to new networks locally or internationally. Creating wealth in the region contributes to regional development.

Although the LbD methodology offers many advantages in the development of the companies’, regions’ and students’ knowledge, there is a continued need to communicate its pedagogical impacts to international partner universities in order

to demonstrate that the LbD study methodology contains similar theoretical elements as those of academic institutions, with emphasis on integrated practical implementation.

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III

PRACTICES SUPPORTING MOBILITY

Arja Majakulma, Tiina Piipponen, Katri Salmi &
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MOBILITY WINDOWS - EXPERIENCES FROM HAAGA-HELIA, LAUREA AND METROPOLIA

In today's working environment, professional expertise has to include international and multicultural competence. The aim of higher education is to ensure that students acquire competencies that are competitive at home and overseas. According to the strategy of the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017, 17-18), students graduating from Finnish higher education institutions should have the ability and willingness to be involved in international, multicultural environments and understand diversity, global challenges and the principles of a sustainable society. Mobility and international perspectives should be incorporated as natural elements into students' studies.

There are different ways of enhancing intercultural and multicultural competences during studies. According to Leask (2015), "Internationalisation of the curriculum is the incorporation of international, intercultural and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a program of study." International student mobility, either as exchanges or traineeships abroad, shorter intensive programmes or joint or double degrees, are traditionally thought of as the most effective way to enhance internationalisation. Not every student, however, is willing or able to go abroad, and the different ways of introducing international elements to studies at the home institution, so-called Internationalization at Home (IaH), is common as well. IaH can consist of language and communication studies, studies taught in foreign languages, typically English, international themes, projects and assignments

in studies, international weeks, online studies with partner higher education institutions (HEIs) – just to mention some possibilities. But some students choose to use the opportunities provided and others do not. One solution to enhance international competences of all students is to provide a structure that makes internationalisation an essential element of the curriculum.

A mobility window is one example of such a structure. Mobility windows can be defined as an identified semester or academic year when a period of study abroad would best fit into the programme. The aim is to facilitate international mobility. Mobility windows may be prescribed both in content and timing in the programme design or may allow flexibility in timing and in content for the individual student. Mobility windows are preferably not used to replicate what would be studied at home, but to allow students to benefit from diverse educational experiences in other settings. They can be either mandatory or optional elements of the curriculum and be highly prescribed or loosely prescribed. Mobility windows can be used for sending students abroad only (one-way windows) or serve the purpose of both outgoing and incoming mobility (two-way or reciprocal windows. (ECTS Users' Guide 2015, p. 25, Ferencz 2014). Laurea, Haaga-Helia and Metropolia Universities of Applied Sciences (UASs) have all incorporated mobility windows into their curricula, but in different ways. In all of them, mobility windows were implemented to facilitate transfer of studies completed during international mobility, but there are other aims as well.

Examples of mobility windows

Laurea

Laurea UAS introduced mobility windows fairly recently. The aim is not only to facilitate student mobility from Laurea, but also to enhance IaH as well. For this reason, studies taught in English were created in the Finnish curricula for those students who choose not to go abroad during the mobility window. Even before the introduction of mobility windows, the aim was that there are studies taught in English in every curriculum. The aim of having 30 ECTS of studies in English was, however, not met in every degree programme, and thus mobility windows were developed. They consist of 30 ECTS, one semester of studies, when a student exchange abroad is recommended. The alternative is to complete studies at Laurea in English in a multicultural student group. Laurea curricula consist of core competence (compulsory) studies and complementary competence (elective) studies. According to Ferencz (2014), mobility windows are usually organised at a later stage of studies and institutions often prefer to teach core studies at home and send students abroad for specialisation or extra activities that can more easily fit the curriculum. A different approach was taken at Laurea. It was decided that the mobility window should be a part of the core competence studies, so that it is a part of every student's personal curriculum. There are studies offered in English also in the complementary competence studies of most degree programmes. The degree programmes at Laurea represent very

different fields of study and the specific needs of each degree programme had to be taken into consideration.

During the mobility window, the first option for Laurea students is an exchange in a foreign higher education institution. A traineeship abroad is also a part of the mobility window in some degree programmes. The second option for those students who for some reason cannot or do not want to go abroad for a longer period is studies with an international content in English at Laurea. Development of international competence is not only facilitated by studies in English, but by integrating incoming exchange students into the studies completed during the mobility window semester. On those campuses where there are students pursuing international degrees, it is also possible to mix groups studying in Finnish and English. In this way all students experience studying in a multicultural group and learning from students from other cultures. The mobility windows are also designed to offer the incoming exchange students from Laurea partner institution a clear package of studies in English together with Finnish and international students.

Haaga-Helia

At Haaga-Helia UAS, mobility windows are used in many degree programmes. The underlying models, however, vary. The aim has always been to facilitate student exchange for Haaga-Helia's own students in two different ways. Firstly, the easy transfer of credits completed abroad enables students to graduate in a timely manner. Secondly, by allowing the students to genuinely benefit from the diverse course offer of the host universities, students enjoy a greater freedom of choice as they are not required to choose exactly the same courses they would study at home. IaH has not been the objective with regard to the mobility windows, but it is otherwise considered very important at Haaga-Helia, and the selection of courses offered in English in the otherwise Finnish-taught study programmes has increased substantially over the years.

Some of the Haaga-Helia degree programmes define clearly the timing of the exchange period and the mobility window for a certain semester. This is usually the case when the mobility window is defined as part of the core compulsory courses, usually in early stage of the studies. In other programmes the timing is more flexible – for example when the students are expected to complete a specialisation or complementary studies as their mobility window. The programmes are rather autonomous when planning their mobility windows. Different requirements may apply in different programmes for both the content and the width of the mobility window, which varies from 15 - 30 ECTS.

In one of Haaga-Helia's English-taught study programmes, Hospitality, Tourism and Experience Management, a flexible model of a mobility window is implemented. The concept of "floating credits" has been introduced. In addition to the compulsory courses, there is a set of "floating credits", 24 ECTS in total, of alternative courses offered, which then turn into a mobility window when student leaves for exchange.

The flexibility of this model allows the students to choose those courses that best support their future careers. This model works well with competence-based curricula. When the student is planning the courses s/he is going to take abroad, it is important to identify which competences each course produces. When the competence is identified, the course can "float" under the same competence when transferring the credits towards the student's degree. The requirement is that there is some "room or space" for the "floating credits" under each competence.

Metropolia

At Metropolia UAS, the benefits of creating mobility windows in curricula are widely recognized by faculty and degree programme managers. For instance, in 2012 and 2013 the university carried out a rather substantial curricula reform in which many degree programmes implemented mobility windows. In most cases the mobility window was created by reserving the second semester of the third year of the four-year programme for elective professional studies (15 ECTS) and optional studies (10 ECTS) with no compulsory professional studies. Students could complete these studies at Metropolia, abroad in a partner institution or even in another HEI in Finland. As timing the more flexible elements of the curricula for one semester is now less complicated, it will be easier and simpler for students to apply for student exchange and transfer completed credits completed towards their Metropolia degree.

In the Industrial Management Degree Programme, mobility windows are developed the furthest and are the most embedded in the curricula. In this field of engineering, demand for competences that enable students to succeed in international, multicultural and diverse environments and teams have been long standing and well recognized. The programme is a Finnish-taught four-year engineering programme with two majors: Global IT Business and Supply Chain Management. The third year of the Global IT Business major has been taught exclusively in English since 2007 and Supply Chain Management since 2017. All incoming exchange students participate in the regular courses together with the regular students. Switching the language of tuition from Finnish into English enables hosting of incoming exchange students and enhances IaH for all degree programme students. It also provides a flexible mobility window for the students as they can take part in student exchange during either of the semesters or during the entire academic year. Teaching in English has also enabled creation of double-degree programmes with partner institutions. This is currently the most structured format of mobility window with a compulsory exchange period in a double-degree partner institution.

In the Global IT Business major, the initiative to switch language of tuition from Finnish to English came from the faculty and the programme's management. Feedback from industry partners and the desire to improve the students' working-life skills were also driving forces in integrating this international element into curriculum. Students have been pleased with the extensive internationalisation opportunities created by this arrangement. In fact, the students who applied to

study this particular major are fully aware that they are choosing a career in a field that is both international and global.

In the Supply Chain Management major, changing the language of tuition to English – first for one semester and then for the entire academic year – took a longer time. It was important that any change in language of tuition would be beneficial for developing the student's working-life skills and that this change would also improve cooperation with partner institutions abroad. Faculty also had to be assured that they had the necessary competences to start teaching in English in an international setting. At the same time applicants had to be informed that parts of the curricula were now taught in English. Support from the programme's management and the department was essential to implementing the change successfully. With many veteran teachers, the best approach was a gradual change in which not all courses had to be changed at the same time. It is also important to secure the participation of incoming exchange students in courses with local students. This, in turn, creates international study groups and helps maintain the motivation of teachers and students to continue with English-taught courses. Excellent long-term experiences from the degree programme, along with the interest and enthusiasm of teachers, students and partner institution, have also been helpful in implementing and supporting changes in the curricula.

Lessons learnt and future development

As described above, the implementation of mobility windows has benefited all three UASs. It supports mobility and the effective transfer of credits completed during mobility. It also facilitates hosting of incoming students and through them provides local students with genuine experiences of studies in a multicultural environment and enhances IaH. Nevertheless, the implementation of mobility windows has not been easy in all programmes.

In all the described cases, the teaching language of certain parts of the curriculum was already English or was changed to English as part of the mobility window. Some elements/parts of the curriculum are more receptive to study in a foreign language and would clearly benefit from the international student groups – for example, topics related to intercultural communication or more subject-related topics such as international business or culture-sensitive nursing care. More challenging topics/subjects are easier to study in the students' mother tongue/first language. Even though students should know that a part of their studies is conducted in English, some students struggle with this fact – especially those students who come to the UAS from vocational secondary schools and have not studied languages as much as high school graduates. Even if parts of the curricula are taught in English, it should not prevent the students from proceeding with their studies. It should also be possible to complete the learning assignments in Finnish if needed. All programmes at UASs include language studies, and English language studies could be integrated into professional courses to help students who struggle with the English language.

The fact that English is used should be seen as a positive opportunity to enhance language skills in a safe environment.

Not all teachers are comfortable with teaching in English either. It is therefore essential to offer necessary teacher training, not only in teaching in English but also in teaching multicultural groups. Participating in teacher exchange programmes is a great way to develop language competences. It also helps teachers meet their counterparts abroad. Another way to develop genuine IaH during the mobility window is to integrate incoming teacher exchanges into teaching. This is an option that has yet to be realized fully. There are already now excellent opportunities for intensified cooperation between teachers from partner institutions.

It would be important to discuss openly the attitudes of students and teachers related to mobility windows and teaching in English. However, the language issue often seems to be an excuse to not pursue such a discussion. If it is unclear why these changes are being implemented and how they are beneficial, mobility windows may seem like an extra burden to both students and teachers. Teachers also need to be committed to these changes in order support students effectively. In some cases, the described approach to creating mobility windows was from down to top – that is, teachers initiated the change. When the curriculum was reformed extensively, a top-down approach was preferred. While both approaches have their advantages and challenges, the successful implementation of mobility windows always requires the full commitment of teachers and management.

Mobility windows could be seen as an even more structured learning entity, which would be more closely integrated into the development of intercultural competences. This would mean, for example, that an intercultural training element could be integrated into the mobility window. In two of these UASs, students participate in intercultural training before, during and after the mobility period. This enhances the development of their intercultural competences during the period abroad, and the transition would be smoother, both when they are leaving abroad, and coming back home. After staying abroad, the students would be guided not only to reflect on their learning and experiences, but also use their new competences in their career advancement. Intercultural training would also be important for those students who study in multicultural groups at home.

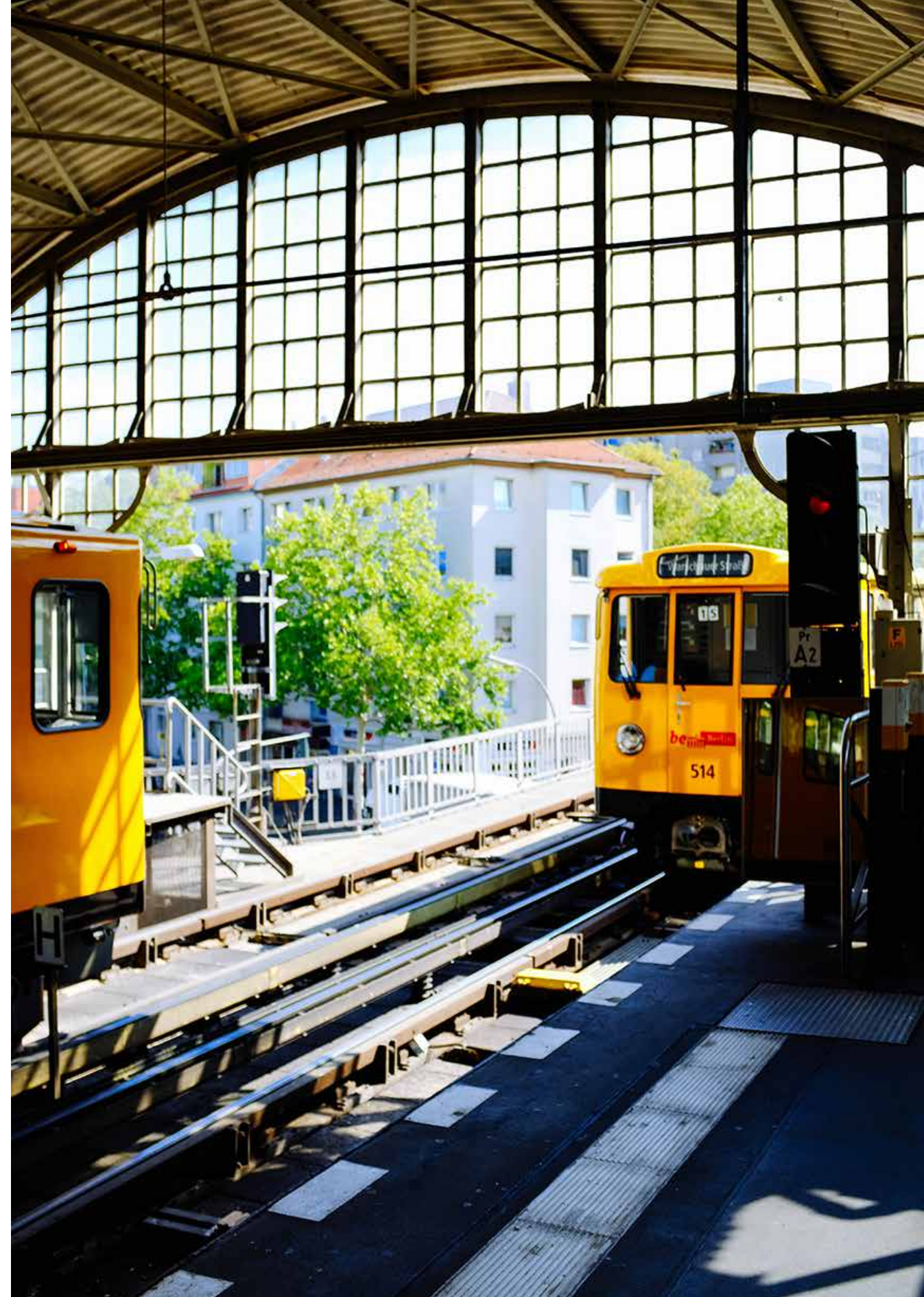
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Marika Antikainen & Tiina Piipponen

SUPPORTING INTERCULTURAL LEARNING DURING STUDY ABROAD

One of the key goals of international activities in higher education is to develop our students' intercultural competence. Higher education institutions aim at educating skilled graduates equipped with both field-specific and generic competences required in contemporary society. Indeed, intercultural competence is a necessity for any successful professional today. One way to develop such competence is academic student mobility, the implementation of which the European Union, national governments and individual institutions allocate extensive resources to. Yet, research indicates that simply spending time abroad does not result in deep-level learning (e.g. Vande Berg et al. 2009, 24). Moreover, a great deal of competences developed abroad remain unrecognised by both students and employers (EDUFI 2014, 31). To maximise the benefits of mobility, both support and active reflection are required before, during and after the stay abroad.

This article presents the reasons behind and the best practices of running a course on intercultural learning for outgoing exchange students at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences.

Strategic importance of mobility and intercultural competence

Students' intercultural competence and mobility are of strategic importance on the European, national and institutional levels. The European Union sees education and its internationalisation as key drivers for building a more cohesive, inclusive and sustainable Europe with a skilled workforce (European Commission 2019).

One of the key funding tools for internationalising European higher education is the Erasmus programme. The European Commission (2018, 11) is strongly committed to the programme and its goals: Erasmus is referred to as one of the EU's most visible success stories and the aim is to double its budget for the programme years 2021-2027. The mobility activities of the current Erasmus+ programme aim at e.g. enhancing the youth's employability and increasing their self-empowerment and intercultural awareness (Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2019, 29).

In the Finnish context, international experience and intercultural competence are considered equally crucial. Finland's International Strategy for Higher Education and Research 2017-2025 sets ambitious goals for the internationalisation of RDI activities and student communities and for developing the societal impact of education, all aiming to support Finland's growth. One practical measure is to increase the international mobility of students in Finnish institutions. (Ministry of Education and Culture 2017.)

Finally, the goals of these policies are integrated into institutional strategies. For example, Metropolia aims at educating the professionals of tomorrow, with the competence and motivation to work in international networks for a sustainable future (Metropolia 2019). Such multi-level strategic interest gives a strong justification for initiatives that aim to improve the impact of mobility.

Support needed for intercultural learning

The immersion into another culture generally tends to develop students' intercultural competence, at least to some extent (e.g. Vande Berg et al. 2009, 18; EDUFI 2014, 16). However, practitioners and researchers alike have noticed challenges. Despite the high ambitions for mobility, views on the depth of its impact differ, partly depending on the challenges of defining and measuring intercultural competence. A widely accepted definition is that an intercultural competent person is able to behave and communicate appropriately and effectively in intercultural encounters (Deardorff 2012 47). Such intercultural competence is usually described as a set of desired attitudes, skills and knowledge, including e.g. respect, the understanding of others' worldviews and an ability to listen, observe and evaluate (Deardorff 2012, 46-47).

However, building such competence requires not only international experiences, but also active learning from those experiences (Deardorff 2012, 47). Not all develop their competences while abroad and not without effort. Immersion into a new cultural environment does not automatically increase intercultural competence, and in some cases, without appropriate intercultural interventions, it may even decrease (Vande Berg et al. 2009, 4, 24). Our observations as practitioners and trained experts in intercultural communication support these findings: students do not necessarily succeed in making the most out of the experience in terms of learning. They need encouragement to actively reflect on their learning and push further. Indeed, the

most recent research suggests that learning is more profound if the student participates in intercultural training activities before, during and after their mobility (Vande Berg et al. 2009, 4, 30).

Employability: from hidden to visible competences

Another important reason to support the outgoing students' learning process is to improve their employability skills. The Hidden Competences report (2014) of Finnish National Agency for Education draws attention to the fact that students generally do develop skills when abroad, but a great deal of the added value is somehow lost in translation; students struggle to recognise and describe their new competences to employers. Similarly, employers do not understand the vast array of skills developed through international experiences, although these are precisely the competences they look for when recruiting new staff. (EDUFI 2014, 31.)

Both students and employers typically describe international expertise in highly traditional terms: as language skills, tolerance and cultural knowledge. These are certainly a part of it. However, in today's changing world a more extended definition of international expertise would cover resilience, productivity and curiosity as well. An expert is interested in global changes and constant learning and is able to resiliently push through changing situations and productively look for new, innovative solutions. This is how employers themselves describe their international experts. Yet, when asked about the benefits of international experiences, both students and employers tend to limit their description to the traditional, rather narrow view. This is where the students need our help: they need to learn how to identify their skills and competences and put them into words. (EDUFI 2014, 25–26, 31.)

Introducing a course on intercultural learning at Metropolia

Encouraged by the research and observations made in the daily work, Metropolia decided to introduce a course on intercultural learning to improve the quality of mobility. After a pilot elective course, we started to develop a comprehensive training model for a more extensive number of students. Several factors led to establishing a compulsory course for outgoing students in the field of technology. Heads of programmes were strategically determined and the teaching staff committed, while significant changes took place in Finnish higher education policies at the same time. Furthermore, intercultural communication is not necessarily a standard subject in regular degree studies in the field of technology, while the industry is inherently international and needs intercultural competent experts. It was therefore decided that all students in technology going abroad would take part in a course of 5 ECTS credits called Student Exchange and Intercultural Learning.

The course is designed to support students before, during and after their stay abroad. The objective of the course is not only preparing them for a successful exchange, but

also adding value to it: deepening their intercultural learning process and developing their employability skills. Another important goal is raising students' awareness of global issues and thereby facilitating the development of a sense of global responsibility.

Contact teaching takes place in four workshops before and two workshops after the mobility. During the mobility students work on three online assignments. This way the course forms a coherent entity focusing on the right points at the right time. Before departure, students explore their identity/identities and the impact of culture on people's behaviour, as well as teaching and learning styles. Students also work on their cultural adjustment skills. During the mobility, students process their experiences. After the mobility, the support concentrates on readjusting to the home culture, analysing learning outcomes and employability and exploring global responsibility.

The course is taught by international office staff with teacher's qualifications and an academic training in intercultural communication. It is open for all students participating in student exchange programmes. Since 2014, over 600 students have participated in the course.

Lessons learnt

The importance of re-entry workshops cannot be emphasised enough. Throughout the course it is important to point out to students that this type of learning is a process. The workshops after the mobility are essential for understanding the full value of the experience, as this student points out in her learning journal: "As a whole this course did not fulfil my expectations – but in a good way. This course taught me a great deal on life, travelling, myself and how to cope in this world and I wasn't expecting that. Now I feel like I know many things and still I have to learn many things. I now also understand how I can better use this experience for my future as a young professional." Additionally, it is our responsibility as educators of future professionals to draw attention to employability and global awareness after the experience. We need to point out explicitly the gained benefits for their job search. Furthermore, we must highlight the importance of global responsibility at the point when students have developed a strong sense of global interconnectedness. In fact, these topics have also been the most interesting ones to our students.

Interactive and experiential methods are the key to successful intercultural training. It is crucial to leave room to discuss and critically analyse participants' experiences. We have used the flipped classroom method, i.e. having students watch recorded videos on theoretical parts before the workshops. This has cleared time for discussions and simulations in class. Groups of maximum 30 students also support interactive methods. Our pedagogical approach is based on experiential learning: first acknowledging and utilising students' previous experiences and then working with the insights of the actual exchange.

It is also crucial to determine the level of voluntariness of such a training. Having experience of both elective and compulsory courses, as teachers we would recommend considering compulsory intercultural trainings as part of the mobility process. In an ideal situation students would see the value of such a course and voluntarily participate. Motivated students make the learning experience more rewarding, also for teachers. In practice, however, students are rarely familiar with intercultural and experiential learning processes. Thus, the vast majority is not able to make such a decision and ends up not taking this type of an additional course (Vande Berg et al. 2012, 396–397). Also, despite the importance of intercultural understanding and employability for policy makers, students themselves might have other priorities for their student exchange (Messelink et al. 2015, 65–66). On a mandatory course, the value of such a training therefore needs to be constantly highlighted. Teachers need to link theories and activities to students' previous experiences, the forthcoming exchange and future careers. Through our observations and students' assignments, we have noticed that while many would not have chosen to take the course had it been elective, at re-entry many feel that the course was highly useful. The course provided them with tools of cultural adaptation and intercultural understanding and helped them to efficiently develop and describe their competences.

Conclusion

In political and institutional agendas the key goal of mobility is to develop our graduates' intercultural competence and employability. This, however, requires support and active reflection. Such deep-level learning can be facilitated by integrating an intercultural training component into the mobility process. It requires commitment and resources from the institution, but the investment pays off: it deepens the impact of mobility on our students. Furthermore, as we all share the same goal, it opens new possibilities for cooperation. For instance, in Finland we launched a network of intercultural trainers in higher education to share best practices and challenges and to work together on national initiatives. Moreover, Metropolia has run collaborative online projects with students on a similar intercultural course at a Mexican partner institution. Such collaborative initiatives are rewarding in many ways and make the learning process more fruitful also for students. As we invest so much in mobility, the returns should be maximised for the benefit of both our institutions and our graduates.

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IV

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

Marjaana Mäkelä

WHEN TEACHERS BECOME LEARNERS - HAAGA-HELIA UAS IN MALTA

Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences have considerable experience in the recognition and validation of prior learning, which is useful in the development of custom-made education for export. Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences is an active contributor to the export of education, and the field of hospitality education is a forerunner in solutions where the validation of prior learning (VPL) is a substantial element of the export product. This paper describes a Haaga-Helia export project in which VPL played an important role, alongside curriculum development and degree program delivery.

The project involved vocational hospitality education teachers at Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) in Malta. The Board of ITS had identified needs for the continuing education of their staff and initiated a long-term development project to upgrade their formal qualifications. Considering the good reputation of Finnish education, as well as Haaga-Helia's pragmatic and solution-focused reply to the requests and needs of the ITS Board in the prospecting phase, Haaga campus was chosen in 2015 as the project provider.

The focus of the project was to recognise the participants' acquired competences in relevant fields and to identify competence gaps, with the results screened against the competence profile of a Bachelor (and eventually a Master) in International Hospitality Management. With these findings, bespoke training was to be designed at Haaga-Helia. The extensive experience of the participants as hospitality business professionals and as teachers in the same field was taken into thorough consideration from the very beginning of the cooperation project, which established the background for a tailor-made educational solution.

Designing and implementing the VPL process

The formal qualifications of most participants corresponded to level 4 or 5 in the Malta National Qualifications Framework (MQF, 2019), which is aligned with the common European framework. However, the selected teachers had extensive practical experience in demanding positions in hospitality industry, for example as food and beverage managers, chefs de cuisine, hotel managers, tourism professionals and so forth, and this practical experience was enhanced by further education courses and a long career as a teacher in vocational education. Some of the participants had also completed higher education studies.

In collaboration with the education export unit of Haaga-Helia, the author of this paper started planning and coordinating the ITS project in late 2015. The timeframe from initial negotiations to launch was tight, as the orientation days were organised already in February 2016. During the few months of preparatory work, the principles of the project were negotiated and the prior formal, non-formal and informal learning of the participants was mapped and screened towards the intended learning outcomes of the abovementioned UAS degree programme. Moreover, schedules were established to suit the modular training approach of the Haaga hospitality campus, which was charged with delivering tuition for the ITS group. Study modules were entirely tailor-made to fill identified competence gaps by means of a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the prior learning of the participants. Hence, the principles of recognition and validation that position the student in focus – rather than observe validation as merely an administrative operation – prevailed (RoadMap, 2018).

The VPL process began with the screening of relevant competencies. This analysis was carried out with a number of instruments: first, formal learning was mapped with qualification certificates and diplomas; thereafter, participants filled in an extensive online survey on their competences and training needs. The survey was based on the detailed learning outcomes defined in the curriculum of the degree programme. A qualitative part complemented the survey, with three essays shedding light on individual targets and objectives for the learning process. A profound teacher's identity and a solid motivation for professional development could be identified in these essays. They resonated with the commitment that became obvious at the final stage, when the author interviewed all participants. This observation phase was complemented by continuous negotiations with the Board of ITS, in order to also meet managerial and strategic objectives: to discuss costs, administration, feedback and other crucial components of this type of transnational education project.

Eventually, implementation plans were finalised to deliver a modular study program to fill in the competence gaps observed between the starting level of participant ITS teachers and the competence profile of a degree graduate in International Hospitality Management at Haaga-Helia. The bespoke training consisted of seven large modules: Concept design, trends and innovation; Managing teams and leading people; Food

production process and product development; Managerial accounting; Business planning and simulation game; Creating culinary experiences; and Marketing and sales management. In module delivery, a blended-learning approach established an innovative, yet demanding combination for both learners and the UAS. Haaga-Helia lecturers in teams took responsibility of one or several modules, whereas the author provided project coordination and acted as liaison across Maltese and Finnish counterparts. In addition, Haaga-Helia had the opportunity to send an employee to Malta to help with the daily running of the project, including lecturer mobility, documentation of grades and flow of information, whilst contributing at the same time to some other ongoing education export projects.

The Berlin VPL Declaration (2019) states that “Validation of Prior Learning is the process of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying the learning outcomes of individuals acquired within and outside formal education and training.” In the Haaga-Helia project with ITS Malta, identification and assessment initiated the process, whilst documentation was carried out throughout the entirety of the training. Validation and certification took place at the final stage, when participants having successfully completed the modular program were able to apply to become degree students of Haaga-Helia. In their degree, they were awarded ECTS credits for their accomplishments, according to the VPL scheme designed for the ITS process. An important weight was given to systematic work-integrated learning that enabled participants to acquire competences throughout their daily work as hospitality educators. Hence, also the mandatory 30 ECTS of work placement in a Finnish UAS degree was also met by the participants at ITS.

The training process and outcomes

Participants completed the modular program alongside their full-time work at ITS, which was a substantial increase in their work load. Modules were delivered by Finnish lecturers, with one or two intensive weeks of tuition in Malta per module that alternated with individual study, online learning in the Moodle platform and plenty of teamwork. Moreover, each module was initiated by a pre-assignment that had a double function: it was an element supporting the VPL process, providing additional information for the lecturer on learning and competences already acquired and thus facilitating the fine-tuning of module contents, and it provided for learners a solid orientation phase to the topic.

Furthermore, from the beginning of the program, participants started working on an individual research or development project that was transformed into a UAS bachelor’s thesis once the status of a degree student had been granted. A 100% online module on research methods supported this work. Counselling and guidance in this task – considered to be one of the most challenging in the entire process by participants – was provided mostly by the same lecturers who delivered the modules. This facilitated cooperation and enhanced trust among participants: they knew whom to contact and could get assistance in their research. Finding time for this

was nevertheless demanding and even stressful, as module studies and daily work could not be neglected, let alone commitments in one’s private life. The transformation from a teacher to a higher education learner was not without some sacrifice, which meant longer hours at the workplace, e.g. when completing group assignments with colleagues, and less leisure time over weekends and holidays.

The 1.5 year modular program was followed by a degree status application, after which the final validation of all learning was completed. Modular studies had been originally designed to benefit the future degree structure, which enabled their full recognition. VPL for teachers consisted therefore of three components: validation of prior formal, in- and non-formal learning, that of module studies towards the Haaga-Helia degree, and of work-integrated learning. Participants, eventually transformed into UAS students, finalised their research and development projects, presented them in a thesis seminar with the author and completed a maturity exam, in accordance with Finnish UAS regulations. A UAS degree was awarded to seventeen ITS teachers in 2017. At present, in 2019, a majority of this group are continuing a lifelong learning path in similar vein, as participants of a corresponding modular program provided by Haaga-Helia that will eventually lead to a master’s degree.

Feedback gathered systematically throughout the process indicates that students considered the training to be highly useful, since it enlarged their perception of the hospitality business in many ways. Moreover, the contents and delivery of the program allowed for the personal development of strengths and interests in the form of a thesis. Obtaining a bachelor’s degree from a Finnish institute of higher education was considered valuable both on part of professional status and personal fulfilment. Pedagogical skills were enhanced, whilst students observed how Finnish lecturers planned and structured the module contents, how they assessed, tackled pedagogical challenges, provided feedback and exchanged with students. An important element of the process was moreover the augmented cooperation with peers at ITS, as new constellations of colleague encounters and sharing were established across teamwork.

Lecturers at Haaga-Helia found the experience rewarding as well, since it provided an opportunity to acquaint oneself with a new, interesting culture and, moreover, to work with hospitality teachers as degree students. For the institution, the ITS process has been a valuable context to test and implement VPL in education export and to gain experience in long-term transnational education, with the objective to complete a full degree.

Challenges encountered

Notwithstanding the many positive outcomes and experiences, an endeavour of this scale inevitably involves a number of challenges. Bannier (2016) identifies two major concerns in transnational education: quality and culture. In our project,

issues of quality were twofold: Haaga-Helia lecturers were somewhat concerned about how approaches with a strong blended learning dimension would lead to learning results equivalent with the ones obtained with more conventional methods, given that students were working within a limited timeframe. Secondly, giving the validation of prior learning an important role is still relatively new in higher education, which may lead to questioning its quality. In line with Bannier's (2016) view, there is still an ingrained disposition to view the validation of in- and non-formal competences in higher education as somewhat controversial. A change in mindset is on its way, yet transparency of processes and constant justification of validation are of utmost importance.

Although the focus here was on the hospitality sector, i.e. a field that is strongly connected to business practices and "tangible" outcomes, it does not automatically mean that all stakeholders would consider prior learning acquired outside formal higher education contexts to be as valid and relevant as formal learning in regular higher education. Establishing solid instruments for VPL therefore requires continuous effort, particularly in the context of transnational education. This links the two fields of concerns together, since in transnational contexts the cultural dimension is a genuine challenge: in the present case, e.g. the very detailed Quality Assurance procedures stemming from national regulations in Malta caused some unexpected, although minor turns, when pragmatic and innovative Finnish UAS pedagogy was applied in a highly regulated, relatively conventional learning environment. Indeed, Greenholtz (2000) emphasises cross-cultural sensitivity as a key factor for successful transnational education, and experiences from projects in Malta are in line with this view.

Another culture-based challenge stemmed from teamwork. Practices that Finnish lecturers would have considered unproblematic sometimes turned out to entail difficulties, whilst new teams were formed and participants needed to establish peer-to-peer connections with colleagues they were unacquainted with. Even in a medium-sized institution, teachers tend to collaborate with the same colleagues for either administrative reasons, or simply because it is natural to maintain closer relations with a limited number of colleagues. Exposing oneself as a learner rather than as a mere colleague is a challenge, regardless of the cultural context, especially when the topic is considered to be difficult.

The third challenge, of a more pragmatic nature than the ones mentioned above, stemmed from the tight schedule. Although the schedule was established by the client, and needed to be respected at the provider's end, in future projects it is important to have more time to ensure thorough preparation. This would enable a wider perspective and a cross-section of opinion, for example when fine-tuning program contents. A team of professionals would undoubtedly obtain more diversified curricular solutions than one or two practitioners who are operating within a relatively tight timeframe. Then again, a limited number of committed project participants may work more flexibly with the contracting partner than an extended team. A combination of a long-term planning team, representing several

disciplinary fields, and a project coordinator in charge of the entire process would probably be the most viable solution in future.

Concluding remarks

This unique study program evoked wide interest in Malta, where the hospitality sector is a key player in the national economy and is expanding at record rates: from 2017 to 2018, inbound tourism increased by almost 17 %, and nearly 90 % of the total number of visitors came to Malta for holidays (Malta Economic Survey 2018). In many discussions with Maltese stakeholders from the fields of education and hospitality business, including the tourism and education ministries, the author is convinced that a thriving hospitality industry is regarded as a national priority. Consequently, similar education is needed to fulfil the expectations of a qualified labour force as well as to take initiative for the field's research and development. ITS is determined to become one of the leading hospitality educators of the Southern Mediterranean region, which means enhancing teacher qualifications and launching other strategic long-term operations. Cooperation between ITS and Haaga-Helia continues, and experiences gathered in this pilot project are valuable for the development of future education export processes as well.

Whilst transnational education projects proliferate and take shape, it is indeed vital to learn from current experiences and to disseminate good practices. The author's experience indicates that there is a need to build solid intercultural awareness among higher education staff, which is in line with the views of Greenholtz (2000) and addresses the concerns raised by Bannier (2016). This necessitates intensified cross-cultural training of all stakeholders involved. Moreover, it is very important to ensure transparency and thorough documentation of projects in order to increase their reliability. This also alleviates challenges related to quality assurance, whether originating from the education provider, from general opinion or from clients. With recent developments and recommendations for life-long and life-wide learning, validation of prior learning will undoubtedly be a substantial element in a number of forthcoming education export projects. Hence, all efforts to develop VPL mechanisms both in national and international contexts benefit higher education institutions in their export ventures.

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Johanna Vuori & Gerard Danford

FROM SHOEMAKING TO CREATING ECOSYSTEMS

We are familiar with the traditional flow of international R&D projects. First, you plan your project proposal for at least six months. If your project proposal gets selected, you then spend the next two to three years implementing the original plan. Like a shoemaker, your project creates something new from scratch, based on your original design, and improves upon that design through a series of pilot rounds. Upon completion of your project, you then write a final report in order that the funding agency's assessors can make a final evaluation. That evaluation will be based on whether your "shoes" fulfilled the criteria you set in the original project plan.

In addition to the above elements, however, most funding agencies today also require that within the project lifetime you should strive to create a scalable mechanism for the project idea to survive on its own and be expanded into new contexts. Such a mechanism is known as project sustainability. This means that you have created a sustainable ecosystem whereby the new "shoes" do not need to be made from scratch again, and again. This is necessary because handmade shoes might be of excellent quality, but always making them from scratch will cost a lot of time and money.

How does one move from shoemaking to building sustainable ecosystems? The Erasmus+ Knowledge Alliances project "IoT Rapid-Proto Labs" has experimented with multiple approaches to achieving project sustainability. IoT refers to Internet of Things. In this paper, we describe the steps we have taken to build a sustainable

project ecosystem. We start by discussing what we understand by the term sustainability and examine its barriers and enablers. Following that we introduce our project and the measures we have taken to ensure its sustainability.

Sustainability

Sustainability in a network project refers to "the creation of the conditions necessary to establish a lasting realisation of the network's aims and the use of its outcomes beyond the initial partnership period" (Bienzle et al., 2007, 119). Bienzle et al. (2007) suggest that sustainability efforts should be built upon the following key factors: 1) the creation of stable relationships within the network, 2) finding an institutional home, 3) integrating the results into local systems, 4) delivering high-quality, transferable outcomes, and 5) finding new funding or commercialising the network.

The most important factor for a project's sustainability is the establishment of a network with stable relationships. However, as Bienzle et al. (2007) point out, project networks vary to a large extent: some have been created on existing long-term relationships whereas others start collaborating for the very first time when working on their grant proposal. If we think of this in terms of seeds and plants, the seeds for building stable project relationships are planted on day one of the grant proposal preparation. The project lifetime can be viewed as the time of "hardening off" the young plant. All project e-mails, meetings or joint writing tasks act as oxygen, heat and water, which strengthen the project network and allow it to survive and reproduce new seeds beyond the project lifetime.

We propose that in addition to these factors sustainability is also dependent on how well the project network has been able to understand, formulate and communicate its value proposition. In a business context, the value proposition is a company's statement which combines its understanding of each of its customer profiles and the company's intention to create value for them (Osterwalder et al., 2014). In a similar fashion, a value proposition in a research and development project may include an understanding of the project's stakeholders and how value is created within each interest group. This means that in order to find an institutional home, for example, a project needs to develop a different value proposition than when looking for a commercialization partner.

While stable relationships and value propositions act as enablers for sustainability, projects also face numerous constraints. In most projects time is perhaps the most crucial constraint. For this reason, projects should begin planning sustainability measures very early in the project lifetime. This should be done in conjunction with the design of experiments during the pilot rounds and should contribute to the fine-tuning of the project deliverables (products or systems). However, at the completion of the project, when the project has something tangible to "sell", end-of-project issues such as reporting begin to compete for project management time and project sustainability.

Another major constraint is the lack of specific skills in the project group. In most cases project members have been selected either because they are content experts or project management professionals. However, the specialised know-how or capability to commercialize project results might not be found in every project team. Moreover, in international projects this challenge is multiplied as there should also be a common understanding of existing ecosystems and networks within different countries.

Our Erasmus+ project in the field of Internet of Things

IoT Rapid-Proto Labs (IoTLabs) is a multi-disciplinary, cross-border, one-million-euro European project. The project is funded from the Knowledge Alliances programme (Erasmus+) for the years 2018–2020. The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency expects projects to have concrete strategies for ensuring sustainability.

IoTLabs aims to enhance student e-competences throughout Europe. Student teams rapidly set up and test new IoT solutions for their client companies. The project involves four universities: Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences from Finland, Leiden University and Technological University Delft from the Netherlands and the University of Trento from Italy. In addition, an Italian research institute (Fondazione Bruno Kessler) and two companies (Houston Inc. from Finland and 247Grad from Germany) belong to the project consortium.

IoT was originally chosen as the key focus area of the project because Europe crucially needs more IoT talent. By 2020 the worldwide IoT market is expected to reach \$3 trillion (Gartner, 2017). However, at the same time, 90% of European small and medium-sized and start-up companies claim to be falling behind in digital innovation. Moreover, the risks and low success rates of new product development discourage small and medium-sized companies from investing in IoT research and development (European Commission, 2016). Therefore, the IoTLabs project helps reduce resource and funding constraints which European companies face when beginning to develop IoT solutions.

The collaboration between companies and higher education institutions in the IoTLabs project offers students complex realistic learning tasks and fosters student learning and competence development (Admiraal et al., 2019). However, what makes IoTLabs even more complex as a learning environment is that the setting involves student collaboration between three different countries (Italy, the Netherlands and Finland) and from three different disciplines (industrial engineering, industrial design and information technology). Thus, the students will not only develop their skills and innovate in their own domain but will also learn to work within an international setting and in collaboration with different disciplinary backgrounds, all within a project-based learning context.

From shoemaking to machines and marketplaces

Using the shoemaking analogy described previously, teachers can naturally create complex and real-life learning environments for their students on their own. They can also try to find companies willing to commission assignments for the students to work on during each course implementation. However, this is much more challenging to achieve if educational institutions also aim for their students to collaborate with students from other countries, other disciplines and plan to do so semester after semester. Furthermore, starting projects from scratch every time by getting new assignments from companies together with new higher education partners is burdensome, time-consuming and may not be viable in the long-term.

To avoid the “shoemaker dilemma”, in other words the lone teacher struggling to get project commissions from companies every semester, the IoTLabs project developed a model for student project management that can be used in any collaboration with several higher education institutions and the corporate sector. This model is our IoTLabs “machine” and is illustrated below as a project funnel (see Figure 1). The IoTLabs project funnel is based on three critical elements: inputs, processes and outputs.

Inputs

Competences and skills are the essential inputs for any successful project. Higher education institutions possess the following inputs: institutional standards, network partners, administrative functions, faculty domains (researchers), and students. Attracting institutional partners is essential for successful projects. However, to do so, institutional partners should possess attributes (competences) which add value to the project outcomes and allow faculty (researchers) to act as the project owners. These project inputs can be attracted through the online platform.

Process

The project machine helps to identify, attract, engage and retain competences using systematic mechanisms within the platform. Therefore, orientation of project participants, management/quality systems and reporting mechanisms are standardized. Projects are also supported through the construction of a process description.

In the IoTLabs project we are creating a 12/16-week project process description/blueprint. Those processes will incorporate Agile, Lean, and Design Thinking concepts. The ultimate goal is to harmonize the multidisciplinary and cross-border collaboration processes and to identify the ideal fit between project types and student capabilities (the blueprint).

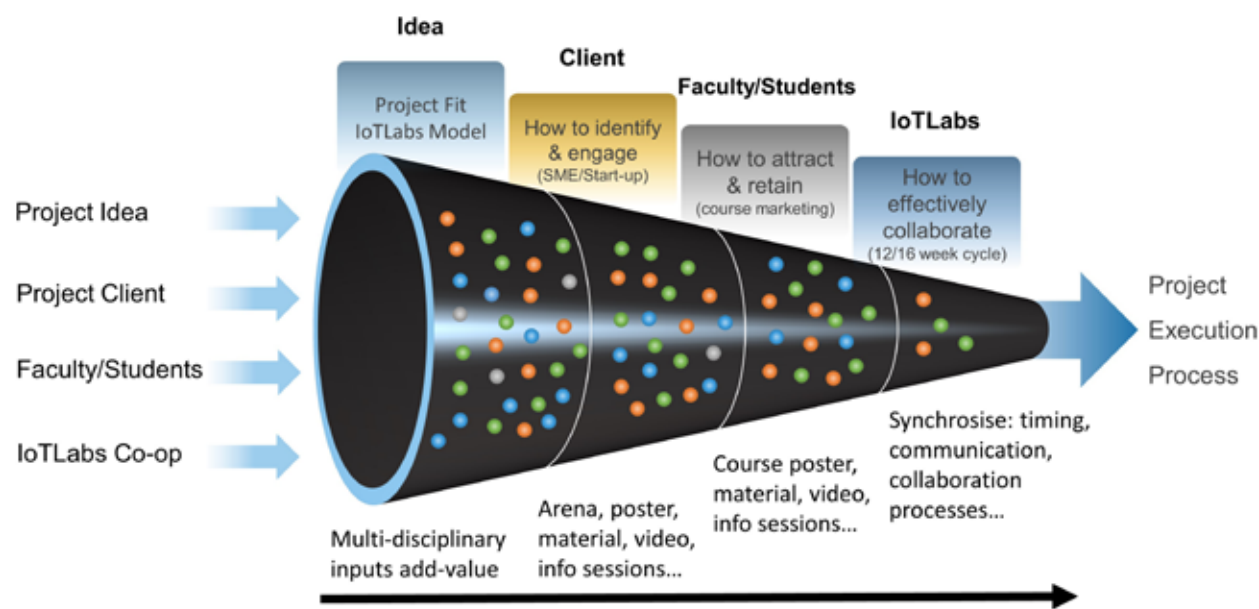


Figure 1. The IoT Rapid-Proto Labs funnel (Danford)

Outputs

Sustainable artefacts such as repeatable project management processes, business/service models, certifications, blueprints, and other repeatable/scalable outputs (standardized process) should be the goal of projects. Furthermore, outputs can be refined and developed further in subsequent project implementations (knowledge sharing etc.).

Marketplace

To ensure collaboration between companies and higher education institutions, both now and potentially beyond the project lifetime, we have created an online platform for IoT Labs. We call our platform the Arena (www.rapidprotolabs.eu). The Arena front-end is a two-sided marketplace enabling collaboration between companies and higher education institutions. Therefore, the Arena helps to attract and match client companies with higher education institutions, along with other stakeholders. The Arena also serves as a showroom for student teams' accomplishments (project dissemination). In addition, the Arena helps to stimulate the flow of knowledge and innovation into the broader marketplace.

Technology is regularly used in higher education to support work processes and learning. Therefore, the Arena back-end toolkit enables individual project participants (students, faculty and clients) to facilitate their collaboration. Open source project implementation tools are made available in the Arena back-end in order to support this collaboration (whiteboards, collaborative writing tools, video conferencing, and chat).

From machines to ecosystems

In the IoT Labs project we have defined the project sustainability goals as follows:

- the partnership between the project institutional partners will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime
- the relationships between project institutional partners with companies will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime
- the curriculum will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime
- the Arena will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime
- the accumulated learning benefits for primary stakeholders (i.e. those individuals and institutions involved in projects) will sustain beyond the project lifetime and will be transferable to new environments

During the project lifetime we will have built a project machine and a marketplace. By the end of the project we will have refined this machine through several pilot rounds. The first pilot project student teams have already worked with projects related to combining IoT solutions with wheelchair design and the application of IoT to solve cafeteria queuing challenges. The second round of pilot projects will involve the application of IoT to swarm-robotics (large-scale interactive flowing displays), and synthetic sensors/machine learning (activity tracking/smart homes).

However, to find a sustainable solution for our IoT Labs machine and the Arena marketplace we must be aware of existing European ecosystems which our project-based learning machinery could become part of in the future. Therefore, we have commissioned our master's students to explore existing ecosystems which our IoT Labs machine might join. Based upon this ecosystem assessment we will then begin drafting a value proposition (how our IoT machine and the marketplace can add value to existing ecosystems).

Conclusion

"From shoemaking to creating ecosystems" refers to opportunities that large-scale Pan-European projects offer higher education institutions' teaching staff. Faculties can join forces with colleagues from other countries and disciplines in order to create "machines" and "marketplaces". This will support university-industry relationships at scale and help to avoid the lone-teacher dilemma ("shoemaker") and eliminate the need for making course arrangements from scratch

every time. However, the key to building sustainable ecosystems also relies on making a careful analysis of the project value proposition. The value proposition needs to be re-formulated at different phases of the project in order to reach sustainable results.

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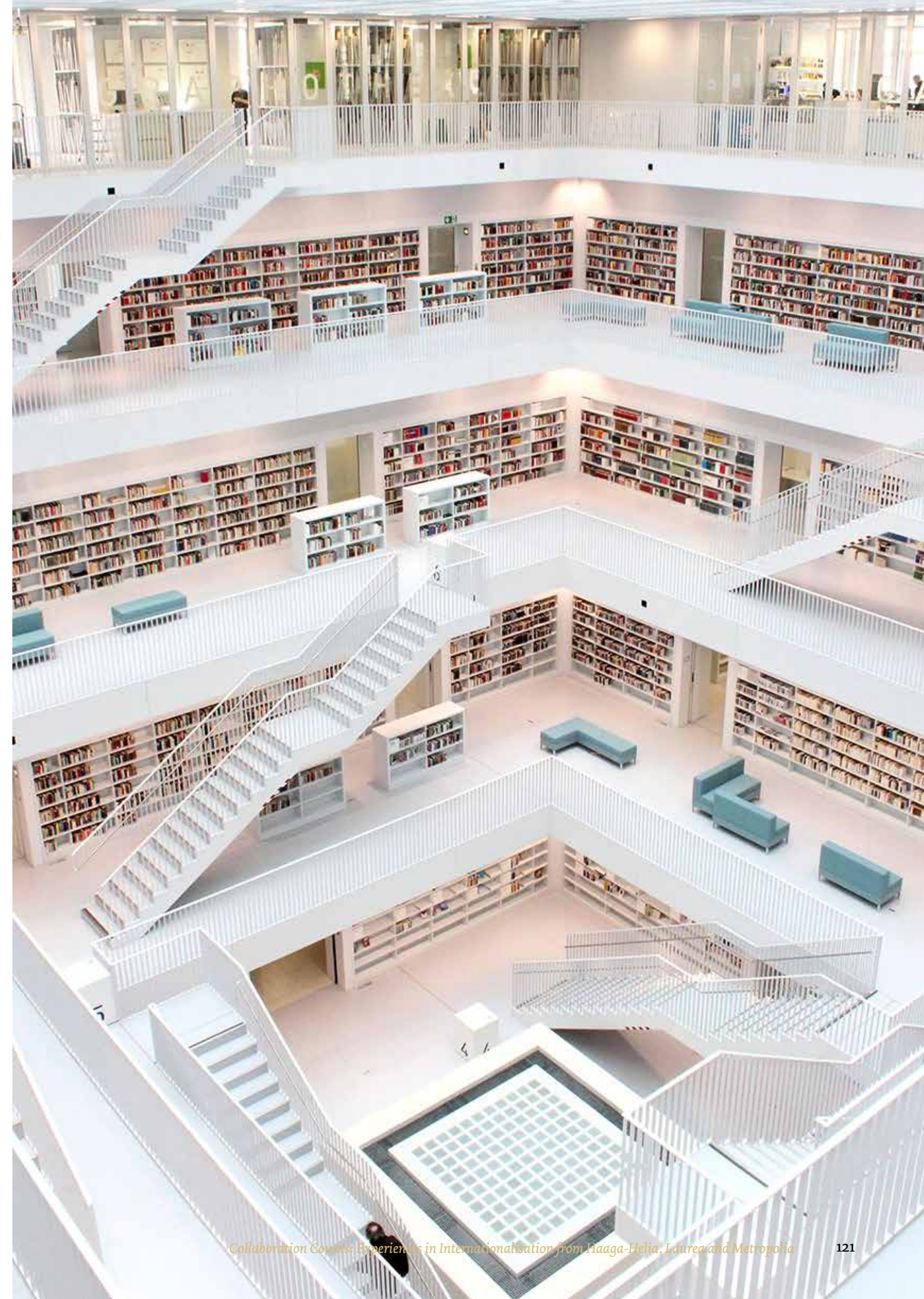
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COLLABORATION COUNTS: EXPERIENCES IN INTERNATIONALISATION FROM HAAGA-HELIA, LAUREA AND METROPOLIA

This publication includes examples of how internationalisation is included and integrated into the education, research, development and innovation (RDI) activities and regional development of three Finnish universities of applied sciences Haaga-Helia, Laurea and Metropolia. Writers are staff members of the universities representing various disciplines and functions. The articles are related to the following themes: Strategy and Partner Network, Internationalisation through Mobility, Practices Supporting Mobility and International Research & Development and Transnational Education.

The publication is targeted for anyone working or interested in international higher education and especially for those who would like to learn about internationalisation in Finnish universities of applied sciences.

