

# PILOTING AND PEER LEARNING VISIT

## #4: DUBLIN

Thursday 7th – Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
Technological University Dublin

### Meeting minutes

#### MEETING ORGANISERS



Comhairle Cathrach  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City Council



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#### PROJECT FUNDING

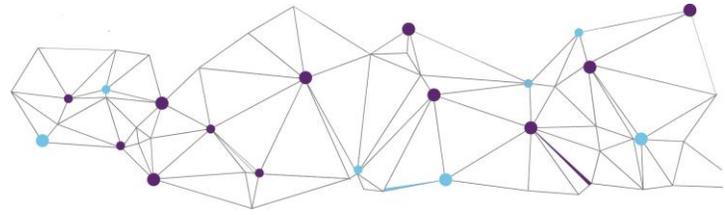


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GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
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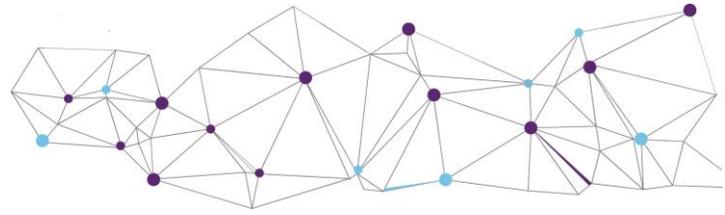
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## DAY 1 – Thursday 7/11/2019

### Opening piloting visit – welcome remarks

#### Presenters:

Community Engagement @TU Dublin – Dr. Noel O’Connor, Director, Student Development, TU Dublin  
 Dublin City Council – Bruce Philips, DCC  
 TEFCE Project Update & Tour de Table – Thomas Farnell, IDE  
 TEFCE Project @ TU Dublin – Emma O’Brien, TU Dublin

The above presenters have discussed the following topics:

#### Context: Higher Education (HE) in Ireland

Irish National strategy for HE to 2030 - key objectives for HE:

- Improve student experience.
- Improve impact on society and economy.
- Improve international recognition of the quality of the Irish HE outcomes.

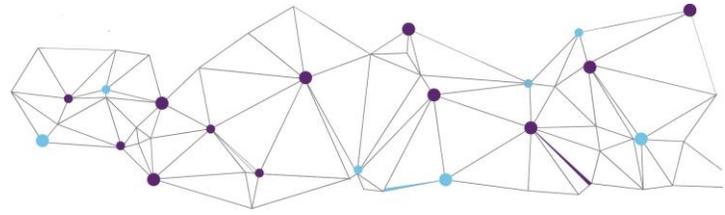
#### Context: City of Dublin

- Strategic vision for the city development: Dublin as a university city.
- Dublin has over 1,8m inhabitants and around 250k students spread around 25 universities; 50% of inhabitants in Dublin belong to youth generation.
- Dublin City Council (DCC) supports all major HE activities and HE projects in the city (e.g. DCC will secure accessible transportation connections between the new TU Dublin campus and other parts of the city).

#### TU Dublin

Key facts that are important for the development of community engagement at TU Dublin:

- Community engagement is an institution-wide commitment.
- Characteristic of the composition of the TU Dublin student body:
  - 13% - ACCESS students,
  - 16% - mature students,
  - 15% - disability students.
- Student success is an important priority of TU Dublin. Student belonging is a key factor in improving student retention and is closely aligned with concepts of academic and social engagement.
- University has an Access and Civic Engagement Office, which has 25 employees and provides the following services:
  - Access services,
  - ‘Students learning with students’ services,
  - Disability support services,
  - Area based childhood,
  - Engagement outreach.



## TEFCE activities at TU Dublin

### TEFCE Piloting process at TU Dublin:

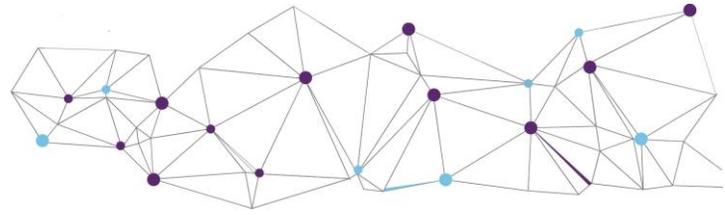
- Started in March 2019;
- Quick scan started in April 2019;
- Evidence collection lasted: June-November 2019;
- Preparations to host the TEFCE piloting visit: July-November 2019;
- Mapping phase lasted: September-November 2019;
- The TEFCE Toolbox works at TU Dublin!

Three important processes that are taking place simultaneously with the TEFCE activities at TU Dublin and influence positively development of community engagement at TU Dublin:

- TU Dublin application to obtain Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement.
- TU Dublin application for becoming technological university.
- Doctoral research from Emma O'Brien (TEFCE coordinator at TU Dublin) connected with the topic of community engagement.

### TU Dublin's recommendations on how to improve the TEFCE Toolbox:

- Improve clarity of language throughout the Toolbox and in the heatmaps.
- Since there is some overlap between certain dimensions and subdimensions, consider merging some dimensions and subdimensions.
- Since the TEFCE piloting process took 8 months, consider shorten the implementation of the Toolbox. Since implementation of the Toolbox is extremely demanding for an institution, consider simplifying the implementation of the Toolbox.
- Consider using spreadsheets for collecting practices instead of collecting fiches.
- Try to simplify the process of filling in the current form of the TEFCE Background Report, while keeping the current dimensions and subdimensions. Narratives of colleagues in the process of implementing the TEFCE Toolbox are more important than the report itself.
- Keep in mind the following principle: developing partnerships and gaining stakeholders' support is the key for successful implementation of the TEFCE Toolbox!



## Thematic focus group 1 - Dimension 1 (Teaching & Learning) and Dimension 4 (Students)

### Focus group participants:

*Dr. Catherine Bates – Students Learning with Communities, TU Dublin*

*Caoimhe Prendergast & Sarah Staunton - Entrepreneurship Students, TU Dublin*

*Dr. John Gilligan - Rehab Project, TU Dublin*

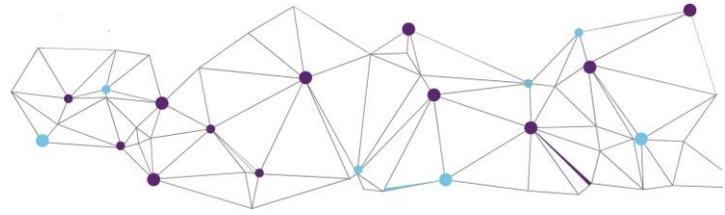
The above presenters have presented the following organizational structures and projects:

### **Students Learning with Communities Office @ TU Dublin:**

- 1.6 FTE staff assigned to work in this office – TU Dublin representatives stressed that this is not enough for providing community engagement (CE) services to the whole TU Dublin. This office is a part of the larger office named Access and Civic Engagement Office.
- Students receive credits for CE activities, because they are built into the curriculum.
- Student CE projects could range from being very short to PhD-projects that could last up to three years.
- There is an award for community representatives and for students who are involved in community engaged activities. The award is given to elected individuals at the graduation ceremony at TU Dublin.
- Plans for the future: all new programs at TU Dublin should have community or civic engagement component.
- Space for improvement: there is a need to establish a proper system for the workload allocation for professors at TU Dublin that will acknowledge the workload needed for the implementation of community engaged L&T and research.
- The office is involved also in research projects (funded through the EU's Horizon or the Framework programs for research and innovation) related to CE in learning and teaching (L&T).
- This office is instrumental for the development of Service Learning at TU Dublin. It also connects scientists with the list of possible research projects (it collects needs from the community through CE partnerships/networks). TU Dublin's employees and students as well as external stakeholders stress the importance of help and services provided by this office.

### **Rehab project @ TU Dublin:**

- Project represents a co-design partnership to develop ICT applications for people with intellectual disability. Students have 13 weeks to develop an app and students' projects need to satisfy the following requirements:
  - Users (community representatives) must be able to express needs they have. It is crucial for this project to leverage student outcomes to community needs. Different contexts in the community determine a form of CE activities.
  - Community representatives should provide feedback during the process of creating an app in order to secure that the product will satisfy community needs.
  - Students should learn various advocacy skills. These skills will be needed to secure support of all relevant stakeholders for the final product (app).



- Community representatives should become an important element of the university-community fabric: they could have regular (weekly) meetings with students; they could visit campus and student cantina in order to have 'eat and drink' events together with students etc.
- TU Dublin takes over intellectual property activities and does not put this burden on community representatives, because they usually have scarce resources for this purpose.
- Project has established a wide network of partnerships in the community, which are necessary to successfully implement the project activities.
- Project representatives expressed that they need more help from centralized services in the process of developing and implementing project's activities.

## Thematic focus group 2 - Dimension 2 (Research) and Dimension 3 (Knowledge & Service Transfer)

### Focus group participants:

*Prof. Brian O'Neill – Research Director & Dean of Graduate Research School, TU Dublin*

*Jenny Haughton – Public Art Co-ordinator, Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)*

*Kathleen McCann – ABC Project, TU Dublin & GDA*

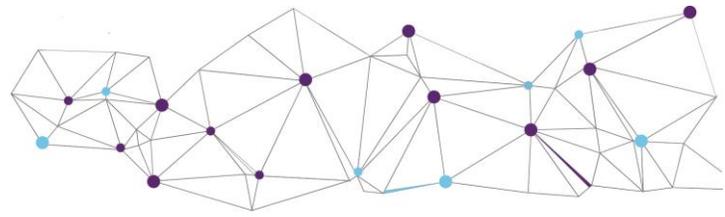
*Eadaoin Kelly – St Mary's Primary School (School Principal)*

*Owen Binchy – An Siol (Community Development Project)*

The above presenters have presented the following projects and organizational structures:

### **ABC Project:**

- National initiative to combat child poverty (0-6 years children). The Grangegorman ABC project focuses on the community around TU Dublin. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase also includes young people and their families.
  - Parts of the community around the TU Dublin campus experience high levels of disadvantage. The new TU Dublin campus should open up this isolated and deprived part of the city of Dublin.
- There are 36 organizations in the project consortium whose aim is to revive the community around the TU Dublin.
  - Founding members of the project consortium are:
    - Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA) – overlooks community benefits as a consequence of developing the TU Dublin campus (employment opportunities for community members, facilitates cooperation with social enterprises, helps integrating older people and children).
    - TU Dublin
    - Atlantic Philanthropy Foundation - provides substantial project funding through donations by the U.S. philanthropist Chuck Feeney.
  - New TU Dublin population (more than 30,000 TU Dublin's students and employees) should not be superimposed on the very traditional and deprived population around TU Dublin



campus, but all the relevant stakeholders on and around campus should co-create a new environment that will enable effective social integration of all citizens.

#### **Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA):**

- It builds relations within the community around the TU Dublin campus through various activities.
- They serve the large percentage of older people in the community around the TU Dublin – GDA coordinates intergenerational learning.
- It organizes Business Breakfast events in order to connect local business representatives who provide support for artists. Artists help creating a cohesive and prosperous environment around the TU Dublin campus.

#### **Research Director @TU Dublin:**

- TU Dublin Research structure has an important role in addressing community needs and solving their problems through research projects.
- Campus Engage is an important initiative which helps TU Dublin developing an effective community engaged (CE) research.
- Funding for CE research is limited (and presents obstacle for future development of CE), particularly for social sciences (dire period for social sciences oriented research).

### *Thematic focus group 3 - Dimension 5 and 6 (Management) and Dimension 7 (Supportive Peers)*

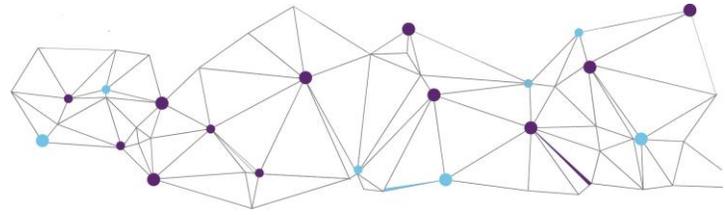
#### Focus group participants:

*Pat O'Donnell – TU Dublin Programme Team*

*Dr. Claire Mc Donnell - Chemistry Education Project, TU Dublin*

The following topics were discussed among above listed presenters:

- Community based responsible research becomes more prioritized on a national (IE) and international (EU) level. It helps further development of research projects at TU Dublin that have community based component.
- The role of Campus Engage initiative (within the Irish University Association) helps TU Dublin structuring CE activities. TU Dublin is a member of the Campus Engage:
  - Eight universities have signed a Charter for Community Engagement (CE) in HE, which represents a joint commitment for CE.
  - Campus Engage provides for its member universities professional development programs for employees in the field of CE.
  - Campus Engage facilitates exchange of best practices and peer-learning in the field of CE among member universities.
- It is important to improve awarding and promotion policies of TU Dublin employees in order to allow employees to dedicate sufficient time and resources for CE:
  - There is a big competition between CE activities and teaching and research workload.



- There is a big competition between the need to publish scientific articles and CE. CE activities do not provide sufficient opportunities to progress and be promoted at TU Dublin.
- TEFCE policy recommendations could help advocating efforts for including CE goals into the new TU Dublin Strategy 2020-2030. Current reality at TU Dublin is the following):
  - Links with industries prevail over CE in every day functioning of TU Dublin.
  - Research based on industry needs prevail over CE research at TU Dublin.
  - Necessity to publish in prestigious journals is more important than CE work.
  - Academics are primarily driven to enhance their academic scientific career. They are not so much motivated to work on CE, because it will not contribute significantly to the enhancement of their academic careers.
- Civic engagement is not visible enough at TU Dublin – many valuable activities are taking place, but much of these activities are not visible and university and community do not know about them.
- Above that, there is no system of valuing CE of employees. Cumulative effect is that CE is still not implemented in a systematic and comprehensive way across the entire TU Dublin.

## DAY 2 – Friday 8/11/2019

### Session: Higher Education Community Engagement in Context

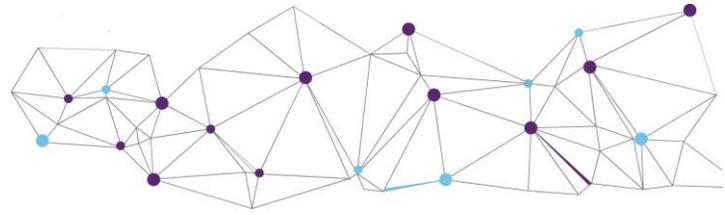
#### Guest speakers:

Colm O’Hehir – Campus Engage Network, Irish University Association (IUA)

Prof. Ellen Hazelkorn – TU Dublin / BHS Associates, Community Engagement Expert

**Campus Engage** representative has explained the purpose of Campus Engage and made an overview of its main resources for CE development:

- Campus Engage is a membership initiative of the IUA; it is run by the IUA and has 8 Irish universities as its members (it includes TU Dublin). IUA as an organization has 20 Irish universities as its members.
- Organizational structure: 4 WGs – engaged research; student volunteering; community based L&T; CCE Metrics and Impact group.
- Campus Engage Charter – signed by all member universities; represents a joint commitment for CE.
- In 2017 Campus Engage has launched Engaged Research Report, which contains definitions of the engaged research and explanation of the term community.
- [www.campusengage.ie](http://www.campusengage.ie) website contains the following useful resources: policy briefs and case studies.



Prof. Ellen Hazelkorn is a discussed the following themes:

- CE could be considered through 4 models: social justice model (civic model), economic development model (3<sup>rd</sup> mission of universities), public good model (holistic, connections between L&T and research – example of University of Pennsylvania, etc.). Depending on the model through which CE is framed at particular university, organizational structures for CE at universities could take different forms.
- Every HE institution is faced with competition among different priorities. Publications portfolio (metrics) based on research is portable, while CE activities attached to the institution are not portable – this is one of the reasons why research activities have often higher priority in comparison with CE activities.
- Creating clusters for CE collaboration could be an effective tool to promote CE. Clusters could encompass universities, businesses and NGO's and they could achieve more working collaboratively.

### Session: Peer Review Team Assessment - Part 1

Peer review team present in this session consisted of the TEFCE consortium members listed in the Annex of this minutes.

#### Proposed changes for dimensions and subdimensions:

(Abbreviation: D – dimension (one digit refers to a dimension – e.g.D1); D with two digits means subdimension – e.g. D1.1. )

#### D1

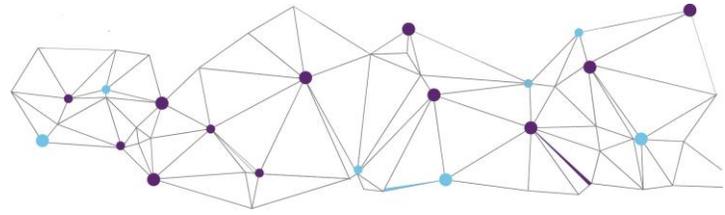
- Improve this dimension (but also the remaining parts of TU Dublin report) in a way that the report refers only on the current reality of TU Dublin. The report should not discuss potential for future CE development that is arising from building the new TU Dublin campus.
- TU Dublin's estimates of achieved levels in this D1 seem lower than the current level of CE at the university – the scores should be closer to the level 5, instead to the level 3.
- D1.1. should go under D3.
- D1.2. – the estimate of achieved level should be higher than level 3.5.
- D1.3. and D1.4. –these sub-dimensions are too similar. They should be reconsidered and maybe merged together.

#### D2

- D2.1. - TU Dublin could provide more examples that could support the narrative text.
- Estimates of achieved levels for subdimensions seem too high in comparison with the Heatmap results – consider changing current estimates of achieved levels.

#### D3

- D3.4. – try to improve the narrative explanation and make it more rich (put some examples like the ABC project).
- D3.1. – consider adding examples of collected practices at the end of the narrative text.



### D5

- D5.1. – stress the importance of collaborative partnership between TU Dublin and local government, as well as between the TU Dublin and other local stakeholders.

## Session: Peer Review Team Assessment - Part 2

Peer review team present in this session consisted of the TEFCE consortium members listed in the Annex of this minutes.

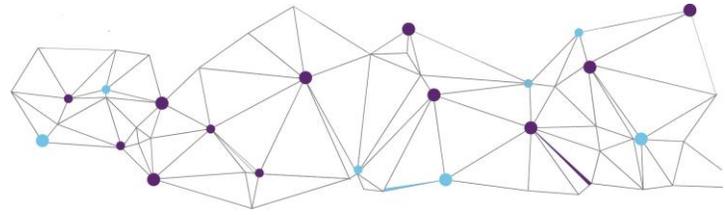
Peer review team made the SLIPDOT analysis for TU Dublin, based on the previous discussions during this visit and based on the TU Dublin background report – SLIPDOT ANALYSIS for TU Dublin:

### Strengths:

- Development of the new TU Dublin campus could help strengthening CE activities at the university.
- There is clear commitment from highest management level for CE at TU Dublin (it represents institutional recognition for CE activities). TU Dublin management sets the CE priorities that are implemented across the entire institution.
- TU Dublin has different organizational structures for CE in place, which help academics in the implementation of different CE activities (e.g. Students Learning with Communities Office).
- TU Dublin encourages students to be engaged and to solve serious problems in their communities (students deal with very serious problems in the community).
- TU Dublin has an extensive dialogue with different internal and external stakeholders, which creates socially responsible L&T environment.
- Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA) offers unique opportunity to interconnect different stakeholders to work collaboratively on CE. It is important that the state has created the statutory and financial framework (by establishing the GDA) which is supportive of CE.
- Dublin City Council and TU Dublin work effectively together.

### Lower intensity:

- CE at TU Dublin is not spread around the whole university. Not all study programs have CE component.
- TU Dublin needs to establish a system of a proper workload allocation for professors that will acknowledge real needs for the effective implementation of various CE activities.
- More help is needed for CE from centralized services – something similar like services provided by the Students Learning with Communities Office.
- Students are not included in the planning of the Grangegorman area, but students seem being included in the development of the new TU Dublin campus – ideally they should be included in both processes.
- There is no support structure at TU Dublin for engaged research.
- TU Dublin has primary focus on research activities that produce economic benefits and on publishing scientific articles. CE does not have the same level of priority as research.



### Potential for development:

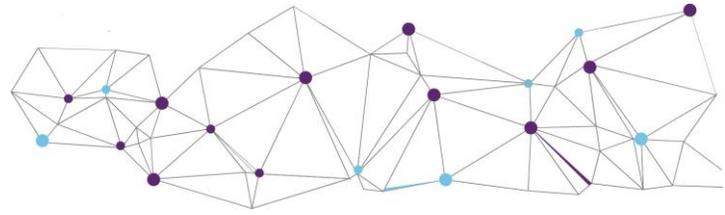
- If TU Dublin improves interdisciplinarity in many aspects of its work, it could have a positive influence on CE.
- TU Dublin needs to improve organizational structures that are necessary for effective implementation of CE activities.
- TU Dublin could be more oriented towards community stakeholders with fewer resources and not so much towards industry sector.
- There is potential for collaboration with other universities on CE. Irish Higher Education Authority (public agency) could provide funding that fosters collaboration in the field of CE between universities.
- TU Dublin should continue fostering structures already in place for building relations with community – e.g. fostering work of the GDA.

### Opportunities:

- TU Dublin is in the process of creating a new strategy for the newly merged university, which represents an opportunity for incorporating CE goals into the strategy (particular attention could be made on developing new promotion policy for TU Dublin employees that rewards CE activities).
- TU Dublin should have more focus towards SDGs in the future. SDGs could serve as a driver for positive change.
- Include more actively students in the campus development plans and Grangegorman development plans.
- Depopulation trends on the national level (IE) could help creating collaborative goals for developing CE. These new goals could help in the development of disadvantaged areas around the new TU Dublin campus.
- European trends in HE are supportive of CE. It could influence creation of new financial instruments for CE in Ireland, but also on the EU level.
- Since Irish Higher Education Authority includes KPIs for CE in performance agreements signed with universities, there is opportunity to incentivize financially universities that are successful in implementing CE activities.
- Collaboration between TU Dublin, local and national government on developing Grangegorman area represents a potential for the enhancement of CE activities.

### Threats:

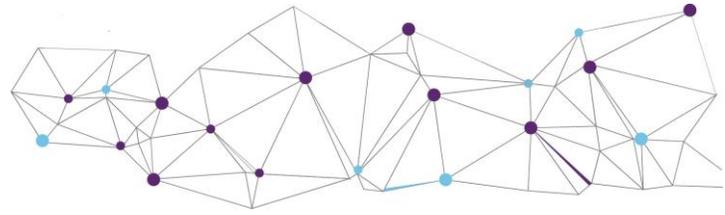
- TU Dublin is undergoing a big change because of the merger - if the current priorities are changed, it could influence negatively the current structures and activities for CE.
- Compliance and regulations (as a consequence of the merger and of the development of new structures and procedures) could hinder development of CE at TU Dublin.
- Hierarchy at TU Dublin could hinder flexibility in decision-making necessary for the implementation of CE activities.
- “Research on the top, CE on the bottom” – new strategic priorities of the newly established university (TU Dublin) could hinder development of CE.



- Grangegorman campus will receive a huge number of students in a very short period (10,000 studs in 2020; 5,000 more studs in 2021): it represents a challenge because of students integration into the local community.
- New Public Management (NPM) tools introduce competition in HE sector and HE institutions try to sell CE using NPM-wording and NPM-approach: this is not coherent with the authenticity of CE.
- Insufficient funding for CE at TU Dublin.

#### Recommendations for the future:

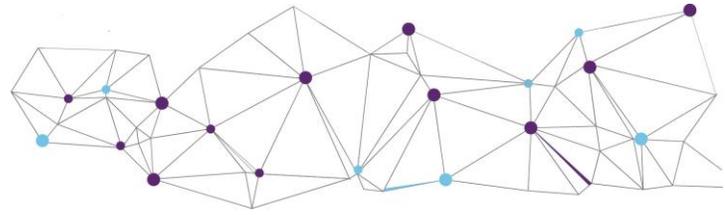
- Test the TEFCE Toolbox outside the TEFCE consortium, because it will provide a clear picture of effectiveness of the TEFCE Toolbox.
- Establish a cooperation with the EUA and other umbrella organizations that could help promoting the TEFCE Toolbox among its members. Try to prioritize cooperation with the European Association for Service Learning, Observatory for Service Learning and SEE Network for Service Learning.
- Define which steps universities are supposed to take after the implementation of the current TEFCE Toolbox (it is not clear yet how universities could continuously develop CE after the implementation of the current steps included in the TEFCE Toolbox).
- Produce a series of videos and guidelines that will help interested stakeholders to implement the TEFCE Toolbox.



## Annexes

### List of participants (TEFCE consortium)

No.	Name and surname	Institution
1	Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt	Institute for the Development of Education, Zagreb
2	Thomas Farnell	Institute for the Development of Education, Zagreb
3	Daria Glavan Sculac	University of Rijeka
4	Bojana Culum Ilic	University of Rijeka
5	Mirela Pašić	City of Rijeka
6	Christian Gerhards	TU Dresden
7	Tom Gunter	TU Dresden
8	Troels Gyde Jacobsen	European Consortium of Innovative Universities
9	Victoria Gomez	Catalan Association of Public Universities
10	Davide Dusi	Ghent University
11	Don Westerheijden	University of Twente
12	Bruce Phillips	City of Dublin
13	Emma O'Brien	TU Dublin
14	Thomas Cooney	TU Dublin



*Photo gallery*



Photo gallery also available on TEFCE Flickr:  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/tefce/albums/72157711734704636>

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