

2023-2024 SYLLABUS

**ADDING IMPACT  
TO YOUR COLLABORATIVE  
ONLINE INTERCULTURAL  
EXCHANGE PROCESS**

**VIRTUELE INTERNATIONALE  
SAMENWERKING IN HET  
HOGER ONDERWIJS**



# LEARNER-LED ONLINE INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE PROCESS

## A VIRTUAL TRAINING FOR TEACHING STAFF IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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## INTRODUCTION

This virtual training for teaching staff in higher education is offered to support your virtual international collaboration, or *VIS*, project(s). This is part of the programme 'Virtuele Internationale Samenwerking in het Hoger Onderwijs', offering activities in support to higher education professionals who are developing *VIS* projects.

'Adding impact to your collaborative, learner-led online intercultural exchange process' is an advanced training designed for those who already have previous experience in designing and implementing international virtual collaboration, COIL, Virtual Exchange in any shape or form. In the four training modules, participants will gain a deeper understanding of designing and evaluating an effective collaborative, learner-led online exchange process. The training also focuses on how to ensure a quality learner experience and measurable impact through monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, during the training there are opportunities for reflection on facilitative teaching, and educator's role in the collaborative learning process.

The training consists of different synchronous and asynchronous components, all taking place online. The total training time is estimated at 16-18 hours, including 2-2,5 hours weekly self-study plus 2 hours of weekly synchronous training time, over a period of 4 weeks. In the four training modules, participants will gain a deeper understanding of designing and evaluating an effective, collaborative, learner-led online exchange process.

By the end of the training, participants should be able to design and facilitate a *VIS* project that fosters intercultural learning, group collaboration, and meaningful learner experiences. They will also gain insights into monitoring and evaluating the impact of *VIS* projects, as well ensuring meaningful learner experience through strategies of quality assurance.

Participants will also gain first-hand experience with the tools covered in the training through collaborative, action-oriented assignments and exercises focussing on the design and implementation of *VIS* projects.



## TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the principles and benefits of Virtual Exchange pedagogy in the context of Virtual International Collaboration (VIS).
- Learn to set tailored learning goals for a VIS project and understand how to achieve them through group processes and social learning
- Promote synchronous and asynchronous engagement to achieve learning goals in VIS projects.
- Identify the role of technology in successful design and implementation of effective VIS projects.
- Gain insights into the teacher's role in a learner-led, collaborative Virtual Exchange approach.
- Explore and reflect on the benefits of a facilitative teaching approach in VIS.
- Deepen understanding of the goals and possibilities for student skill development throughout the VIS project.
- Gain knowledge on successful quality control practices for VIS projects.
- Learn about different approaches and methods for monitoring and evaluation.
- Explore opportunities and challenges of collaborating with other teaching staff on VIS project(s).

## TASKS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### 1) Training materials (asynchronous, on Canvas)

This is a ***paced training***, which means that a new module opens each week. Participants are expected to have reviewed the module's training materials ahead of the online group sessions. The modules consist of multimedia learning materials, reflection activities and discussion questions, are accessible through the Canvas training platform.

### 2) Discussion points & exercises (asynchronous, on Canvas)

The training content on canvas also include discussions points marked by 'Let's discuss', and exercises marked by 'Activity'. Participants are expected to contribute, asynchronously, to these learning activities. They are specifically designed to elicit reflection, foster asynchronous interaction between participants and to facilitate peer-learning and collaboration.



### 3) Design lab (asynchronous)

Throughout this training, participants will be working on their own VIS project design. Step by step they will be adding learning components, best practices and digital tools to a process design. Participants will critically assess and improve their design, as well as engage in providing and receiving feedback from their colleagues. By doing this, they will collaborate on designing an intercultural online exchange process with impact, that is tailored to the needs of your VIS project. This design lab starts in module 1, and specific instructions are given at the end of each module's content.

### 4) Online group sessions (synchronous, ZOOM)

Participants meet online with fellow practitioners and your trainer on a **weekly** basis for a **two-hour synchronous (live) training session**. This training consists of **four synchronous sessions** in total. These virtual group meetings will take place on ZOOM. This is the time to deepen your understanding of the training content, learn from your colleagues, and put theory into practice through interactive exercises.

These virtual group meetings will take place on ZOOM<sup>1</sup>, in a closed session. These sessions are highly interactive and therefore **timely attendance** and **active participation using both video and audio** is expected.

## PARTICIPATION AND ASSESSMENT

To successfully complete this training and receive a certificate of completion, participants are required to:

- Participate actively in **at least 3 out of 4 synchronous sessions**<sup>2</sup>;
- Complete **80% of the asynchronous tasks and assignments** detailed above; through contributing to the discussions (marked by '**Let's discuss**'), asynchronous exercises (marked by '**Activity**') and the assignments as part of the **design lab**.

## CONTACT

Questions about your participation can be emailed to [visinhetho@sharingperspectivesfoundation.com](mailto:visinhetho@sharingperspectivesfoundation.com)

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<sup>1</sup> Participants will receive an invitation including the ZOOM link to the meetings via e-mail. Please do not share this meeting information with others.

<sup>2</sup> Active participation includes joining the session with working video and audio, contributing to discussions, and attending the full meeting.



## MODULE BREAKDOWN

### Opening Module: Welcome to this training!

- Getting started
- Welcome!
- Virtual international collaboration in higher education
- How does the training work?
- Virtual training session information
- How to use Canvas

### Module 1: Introduction to VIS and Virtual Exchange pedagogy

#### *Objectives*

- Gain knowledge on the Virtual Exchange pedagogy and its benefits for VIS.
- Explore the teacher role in a learner-led, collaborative Virtual Exchange approach.
- Increase your understanding of the role technology plays in successful design and implementation of effective VIS projects.
- Deepen your knowledge on how to design successful virtual intercultural learning processes for your VIS.

#### *Asynchronous training content & tasks*

- Pedagogy and approach:
  - ◆ Introduction to VE
  - ◆ The role of international learning and exchange in VIS
  - ◆ Adopting a process oriented approach
- The role of the teacher
  - ◆ Towards facilitative teaching
  - ◆ Building effective group dynamics online
  - ◆ Your role as a teacher/facilitator
- The role of technology
  - ◆ Constructive online engagement and tech
  - ◆ Communication methods online
- Activity: Icebreaker on training expectations (from module 'Welcome to this training')
- Discussion point: Your role as a teacher/designer/process leader
- Design lab part I : Critically review your VIS-project's learning objectives



## Module 2: Adding impact to the learning process

### *Objectives*

- Increase understanding of the goals and possibilities for student learning in VIS.
- Understand the essential building blocks to promote learning in the VIS student exchange.
- Recognize the importance of group dynamics in virtual settings and the benefits of developing effective group dynamics for virtual student exchange sessions.
- Develop strategies for promoting group ownership, including reflecting on expected behaviour, norm-setting, and goal-setting.
- Explore challenges in designing successful virtual intercultural learning and collaboration in VIS.

### *Asynchronous training content & tasks*

- Designing the VIS student exchange journey
    - ◆ Ready, set, design
    - ◆ Promoting learning with your design
    - ◆ Sample design structure
  - Promoting engagement and learning for increased impact
    - ◆ Types of engagement and learning in VIS
    - ◆ Relationship-centred learning and group process
    - ◆ Methods for asynchronous and synchronous engagement
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- Discussion point: Building blocks in designing a VIS
  - Discussion point: Relationship building en group process framework
  - Design lab part 2 : Map your VIS project exchange process



## Module 3: Monitoring and evaluation in VIS process design

### Objectives

- Learn about approaches (tools) for monitoring and evaluation, to assess impact in your VIS.
- Gain knowledge on methods for successful quality control.
- Explore best practices of this collaborative, learner-led intercultural exchange approach.
- Practice design skills by mapping the 'monitoring and evaluation' for your VIS project.

### Asynchronous training content & tasks

- Student engagement and learning in VIS
    - ◆ Types of engagement and learning in VIS
    - ◆ Relationship-centred learning
  - Foundational strategies for meaningful engagement
    - ◆ Assessing engagement
    - ◆ Methods for asynchronous and synchronous engagement
    - ◆ Working with different online communication tools
    - ◆ Cultivate collaboration through interactive assignments
    - ◆ Promoting engagement - reminders
    - ◆ Activities and tools for strengthening connections online
  - Monitoring and evaluation
    - ◆ Introduction to monitoring and evaluation in VIS
    - ◆ What can be measured in M&E
    - ◆ Best practices and examples
  - Quality assurance - ensuring meaningful learner experience
    - ◆ Group process framework
    - ◆ The GPF as a tool for quality assurance
    - ◆ Setting students up for success
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- Discussion point: Setting students up for success
  - Design lab part 3: M&E and quality assurance in your VIS project exchange process





## Module 4: VIS and beyond

### Objectives

- Gain knowledge on how to collaborate with other teaching staff on successful VIS projects;
- Deepen your virtual exchange expertise by learning about the application of the different monitoring and evaluation methods for VIS;
- Explore best practices of this collaborative, learner-led intercultural exchange approach;
- Complete the collaborative design project and finalize your 'Design Lab' assignment.

### Asynchronous training content & tasks

- Deepen the learning and collaboration
  - ◆ Interactive assignments
  - ◆ Critical thinking
- Educators as collaborators in VIS
  - ◆ Purpose and goals of collaboration
  - ◆ Best practices of online teamwork
- Wrapping up
  - ◆ Summing up
- Discussion point:
  - Promoting or pushing critical thinking?
- Activities:
  - Reflection and self-assessment
  - Final goodbyes and parting gifts
- Design lab part 4: What is next?

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This training is designed and implemented by The Sharing Perspectives Foundation, one of the consortium members of 'Virtual International Collaboration in Higher Education'.

The Sharing Perspectives Foundation is a not-for-profit offering contemporary online learning experiences for people to interact constructively across divides, whether national, cultural, social, or political. The Sharing Perspectives Foundation strives to work with education professionals and institutions to ensure that students all over the globe benefit from enriching, meaningful international exchanges and transversal skill building.

