



CIVIS HUBS

COMMIT TO CREATE | FUTURE-PROOF EDUCATION | NURTURE SUPPLE MINDS

WHAT IS A CIVIS HUB? Hubs are where academics from across the CIVIS Alliance meet to develop collaborative, challenge-based educational opportunities – everything from standalone courses to full programs. The CIVIS Hubs are governed by representative councils of academics from all member universities, but their activities are bottom-up and open to participation from teachers and researchers across the Alliance.

Each hub has its own thematic focus linked to one vital challenge facing our societies and our world.

HUB 1

Climate, Environment, Energy

Coordination:



University
of Glasgow



Stockholm
University

HUB 5

Digital and Technological
Transformation

Coordination:



Universidad Autónoma
de Madrid



UNIVERSITY OF
BUCHAREST

CIVIS
HUBS

HUB 2

Society, Culture, Heritage

Coordination:

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens
EST. 1837

HUB 4

Cities, Territories, Mobility

Coordination:



UNIVERSITÉ
LIBRE
DE BRUXELLES



PARIS
LODRON
UNIVERSITÄT
SALZBURG

HUB 3

Health

Coordination:



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



UNIL | Université de Lausanne

All five hubs were part of the initial CIVIS proposal, but we only committed to setting up three in our first phase. Three years later, all five hubs are already established and working! This shows the enthusiasm and momentum across the CIVIS Alliance and empowers us to deliver relevant educational opportunities across all five CIVIS challenges.

141

educational
opportunities developed
within the Hubs so far

Open to
students at all

10

CIVIS member
universities.

Academics from at least

3

member universities
are involved in creating
every course

Range from webinars
and seminars to

Full degree
programmes

Often involve partners
outside the
university

Growing
collaboration with our
African partner
universities

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Building collaborative educational programs across so many universities is a hugely complex task. It requires a process of exploration, discovery and innovation which is as much about attitude as it is about process. Building the CIVIS Hubs took the courage to experiment, to recognise that some experiments will fail, and to learn from both failures and successes.

Innovation requires time. It can be fostered but not forced and it cannot be put on a fixed schedule. True innovation which leads to meaningful change requires that existing structures and processes are open to modification and improvement – and sometimes even elimination.

Taking risks, learning to fail and changing established systems. These are all approaches that will face hurdles, barriers and setbacks. But these challenges can reveal the positive potential that was always there or bring forth inspiring new solutions. This is what we have learnt from establishing our CIVIS Hubs.

Lack of a “matchmaking” function that allows academics and administrators from the alliance universities to meet and interact

The lack of incentives (other than personal interest) for academics to participate in CIVIS courses

Having courses or other educational offerings accredited across all universities

A lack of general understanding among academics and administrators in the alliance universities as to what CIVIS is and wants to do, and why they should get involved

Differences in interpreting terminology and definitions: What exactly is an ECTS? What does an “educational program” mean?

Aligning courses across universities with different academic calendars

CHALLENGES AND SETBACKS

Different course administration software and systems used among the alliance universities

A lack of central support to academics at each university in terms of helping academics developing and delivering educational offerings in reporting about them

Innovation requires creativity and the willingness to try something new, fail at that experiment, learn from our failures and try again. This willingness has been very clearly evident in all the hubs, and is a key element of their success.

STRENGTHS AND SOLUTIONS

The central CIVIS administrative team has developed a suite of excellent tools without which the work in the hubs would not have been successful. These include:

A database of courses across all alliance universities

Regular newsletters for the CIVIS community that report on activities and flag upcoming opportunities

An information flow about funding and other support for educational offerings

The “digital campus” web site

A central facility for storing and sharing information about courses and other educational offerings

This central support has been absolutely essential in the success of not only the hubs, but CIVIS as a whole.

The extraordinary level of goodwill that has been exhibited among both academics and administrators is a huge enabler. Still, it must be recognized that relying on goodwill is not a viable strategic plan for continued success. A clear incentive structure for participation is needed.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

As CIVIS enters a new phase of its development, we can be proud that the CIVIS Hubs have already come a long way in a short time. Still, there are some things that we would have liked to accomplish but did not yet manage. And there are some things we have learned along our journey that we want to note and share.

HERE ARE OUR TOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CIVIS HUBS:

Hub councils should have more opportunities to exchange experiences and best practices.

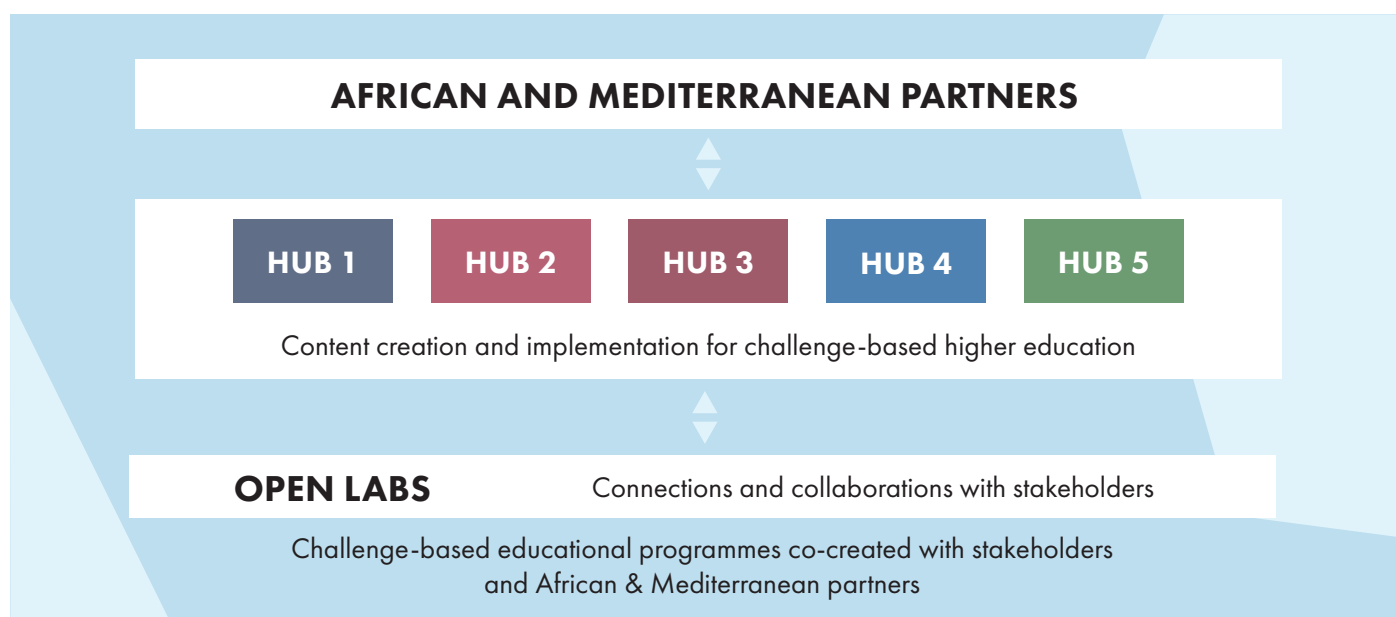
All of the hubs encounter similar hurdles as they develop their educational programs, and we should build in ways to share best practice and solutions to these among the hubs

Push ahead with our ambition to combine courses into full CIVIS educational programmes.

Recognise that this will require both time and resources. Commit for the long-term.

Give local community stakeholders and African partner universities a great role in the development of our educational programs.

We are already working towards this goal, but we should embed the African partners in the Hub and mobilise the potential of connections with the CIVIS Open Labs.



Keep a clear focus on the “soul” of CIVIS.

Our fundamental values must shape the educational programmes we develop. We are here:

- To train people to have the capacity for critical thinking;
- To educate individuals to have clear ethical and democratic values;
- To prepare our students to find and critically examine information and to base their decisions on evidence and not only on ideology;
- To create an educational environment where mutual respect is normal and where we help build a fair and flourishing society within the limits of our only planet.



CIVIS, a European Civic University is an Alliance of the 10 following European Universities: Aix-Marseille Université (France), National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece), University of Bucharest (Romania), Université libre de Bruxelles (Belgium), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain), Sapienza Università di Roma (Italia), Stockholm University (Sweden), Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen (Germany), Paris-Lodron University of Salzburg, University of Glasgow (UK). Selected by the European Commission as one of the first 17 European Universities pilots, it brings together almost 600 000 students and staff members.

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