



Laboratory For New Forms Of Collaboration

## coLAB TOOLKIT

### INCLUSIVE PRACTICES TOWARDS REFUGEES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Reflections from a year long project delivered across four European countries to create an entry point for refugees with professional experience and qualifications into work in higher education.

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## Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation (DISCO)

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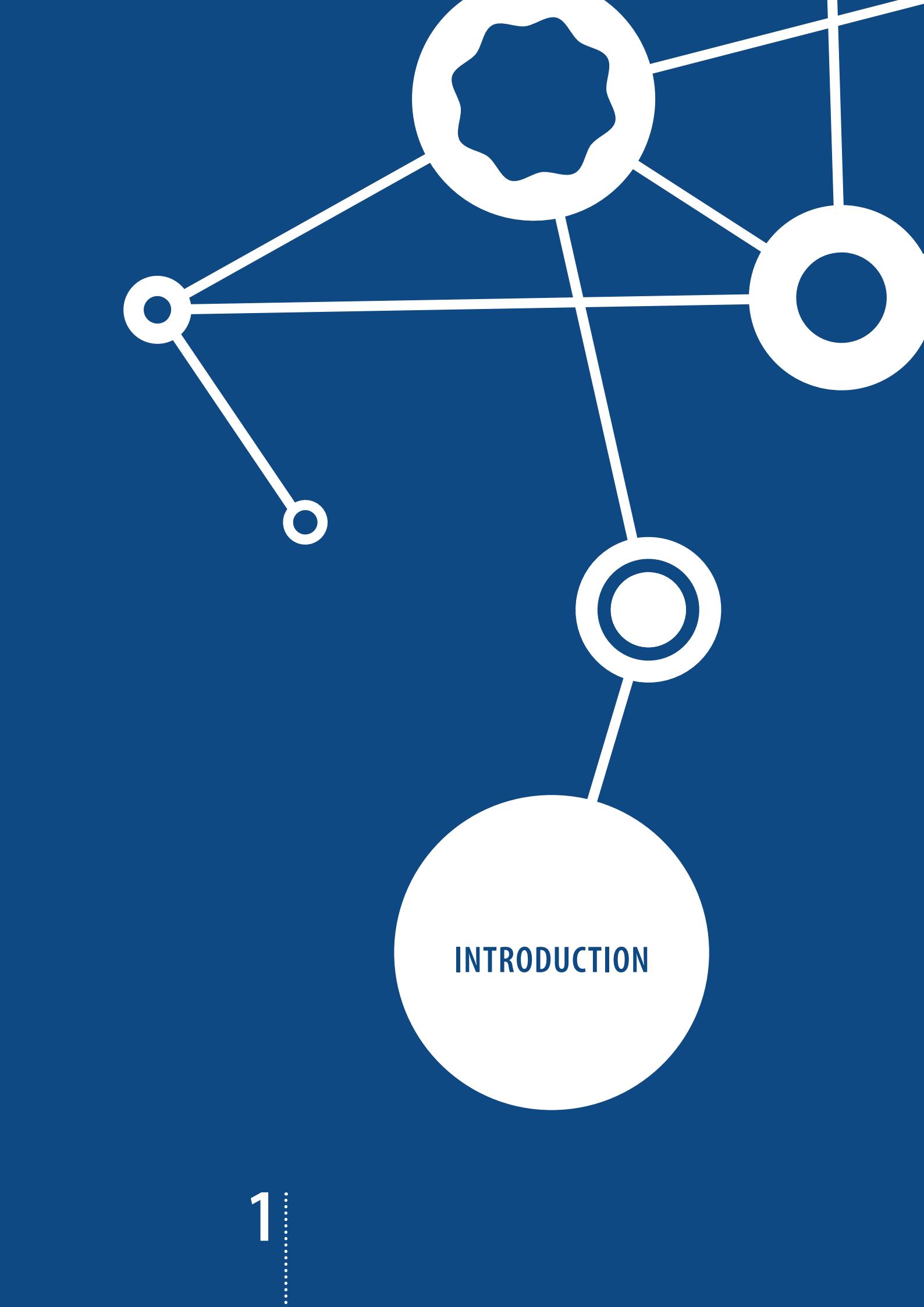
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The background features a complex network of white lines connecting various circular nodes, some of which contain dark blue shapes. A large central circle contains the word "INTRODUCTION".

# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

According to the UN's refugee agency, the UNHCR, over a million people arrived in Europe in 2015 to claim asylum – the peak of what is known as the “refugee crisis”. Since then, the number of people arriving has fallen sharply, but European countries are still working through the task of accommodating the new arrivals. To support this potentially vulnerable new population, higher education institutions around Europe have begun programmes to integrate refugees and migrants. Education has a crucial role to play, not just in academic institutions, but in strengthening wider society too.

coLAB, a collaboration between five higher education institutions in Europe, is born from the observation that many refugees bring with them substantial professional experience and qualifications. Unfortunately, their prior achievements may not be recognised by their new host communities, and it is common for refugees to experience higher than average levels of unemployment, or to be employed below their level of skill. The coLAB project, implemented within the framework of the European Union/Council of Europe joint programme “Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation” (DISCO), aims to remedy this by hiring refugees as “visiting experts” who can share their knowledge with students and teaching staff, within the frame of the academic curriculum. The project provides valuable training to refugee experts, and promotes inclusive academic practices that can potentially benefit everybody in higher education.

In total, 28 refugees, from 14 different countries, took part in the project. They had 20 different academic specialisms between them. The project helped change perceptions of refugees held by teaching staff and students, and improved the attitudes of refugees to their host countries. We were greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm shown for the project by educational institutions and wider civil society, and the flexibility of teaching staff in their collaboration with the participants. This toolkit explains how we did it, and aims to provide useful tips for institutions who want to run similar projects.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/charter-edc-hre-pilot-projects/home>

# PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

## Haute Ecole Galilée-IHECS, Belgium

Situated in the heart of Brussels, and part of the Haute Ecole Galilée, the Institut des Hautes Études des Communications Sociales (IHECS) is the leading school of communication in the French-speaking part of Belgium. With more than 2,000 students and 150 teachers and invited experts, it offers courses at undergraduate and Master's level, specialising in theory-based teaching and practical apprenticeships in media and foreign languages. Haute Ecole Galilée-IHECS combines hands-on, creative work with education in media and social responsibility. Students are taught about economic, social and environmental challenges on a local and global scale, and encouraged to take part in intercultural dialogue and reflect on their own cultural contexts.

In Belgium, refugees are employed at well below the average rate – a 2014 study suggested that only 33 per cent were in work (Adèle Garnier and Annaelle Piva, "Labour market of refugees and asylum seekers in Brussels: innovation and institutional complementarity", Brussels Studies, General collection, N°135). Contributing factors include poor command of official languages, difficulty getting prior skills and qualifications recognised, and the general climate of discrimination against people from outside Europe.

Like all higher education institutions in Belgium, Haute Ecole Galilée-IHECS makes social inclusion a priority. The right to higher education is also guaranteed by article 24 of the Belgian constitution. In early 2018, the institution's international office launched a specially-designed training programme for refugees, with a personalised schedule and various forms of practical assistance. This gave rise to another idea: that people with sufficient experience could teach others, as well as learn.

## IHECS Academy, Belgium

IHECS Academy (asbl IHECS) is a further education training centre that works in conjunction with Haute Ecole Galilée-IHECS. It seeks to be at the forefront of the latest developments in communication studies, and works closely with Belgian public services on training and social inclusion. IHECS Academy promotes social and cultural progress by training young professionals as well as their seniors. As the world evolves, so does IHECS Academy, by exploring and using innovative teaching methods to make the most of our valued human resources.

## London College of Communication, University of the Arts London, UK

London College of Communication is situated in central London, just south of the River Thames. It is a constituent member of University of the Arts London (UAL) which is one of the world's most renowned institutions for education in arts,

*"I liked the preparation and follow-up of the project, a frame that gave us enough space. It was a sensitive way to proceed, taking charge of administrative matters and making sure we [host and refugee teachers] would feel good without this project being a burden for us at the same time."*

- Host teacher interview, IHECS

design, fashion and communication. UAL's student population in any given year is approximately 20,000.

LCC has a reputation for delivering hands-on teaching that prepares students for careers in the creative industries. It offers courses at diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate level in subjects such as graphic design, photography, film, animation, journalism, public relations, sound arts and interactive design.

The institution is located in Southwark, a London borough that is characterised by a wealth of ethnic and linguistic diversity. The most recent population census found that almost half of local residents belonged to a minority ethnic group, with over 120 different languages spoken. In many ways, the university's student population mirrors its surrounding area. Just under three quarters of students are from black, Asian or minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds.

The university strives to draw on and contribute to its local and global environment, and foster a dynamic academic community where ethnic diversity and cultural literacy informs its policies, values and curricula. One route to supporting this goal is by building a more diverse academic staffing body, both in terms of demographics and experience.

According to figures published by the UNHCR, there are an estimated 120,000 refugees in the UK. Although there are significant refugee communities in London and other large cities, the numbers compared to the general population are relatively small. All those with refugee status have the right to work in the UK, but research suggests that the unemployment rate amongst this part of the population is three times that of the UK-born population.

coLAB complements the strategic priorities of UAL, as it seeks to attract those who will bring unique approaches to teaching and subject specialisms – and will ultimately help students to discover different ways of understanding and interpreting the world.

## **Université Clermont Auvergne, France**

The Université Clermont Auvergne (UCA) was created in 2017 from the merger of Université Blaise Pascal and Université d'Auvergne in central France. With 35,000 students, including 4,600 international students, and 3,300 staff, UCA is a key institution in this part of Europe. Its 20 faculties and 5 doctoral schools offer more than 170 training programs.

UCA is located in the Auvergne region of France, which combines rural areas with a wide range of industries, from SMEs to international companies, some of which have their headquarters here. UCA has long been an outward-looking institution. Its national diplomas can be obtained through either initial or continuing education programs; specific training and facilities are offered to the general public, in collaboration with other local institutions.

Since its creation UCA has been developing several initiatives to help the integration of refugees in French society. In recent years, the French language centre FLEURA (Centre de Français Langue Étrangère et Universitaire en Région Auvergne) obtained grants from the French-language university agence (the AUF) French to refugees in a single semester. This helps achieve UCA's policy of exempting refugees from registration fees. Each year, UCA waives fees for around 40 asylum-seekers and offers them language lessons. In 2018, the Blaise Pascal research laboratory in mathematics took part in PAUSE (Programme d'aide à l'Accueil en Urgence des Scientifiques en Exil), which offers a placement to a refugee researcher. Through these and other projects, UCA aims to be recognised as a local and national actor in the integration of refugees and migrants.

## **Università di Roma LUMSA, Italy**

LUMSA University was founded in Rome in 1939 and it is characterised by its openness to the idea of universal human citizenship. LUMSA is one of the most important non-state universities of central Italy, with around 9,000 students and 800 teachers and professors. It has three faculties in neighbouring locations, and other branches operating in Palermo and Taranto.

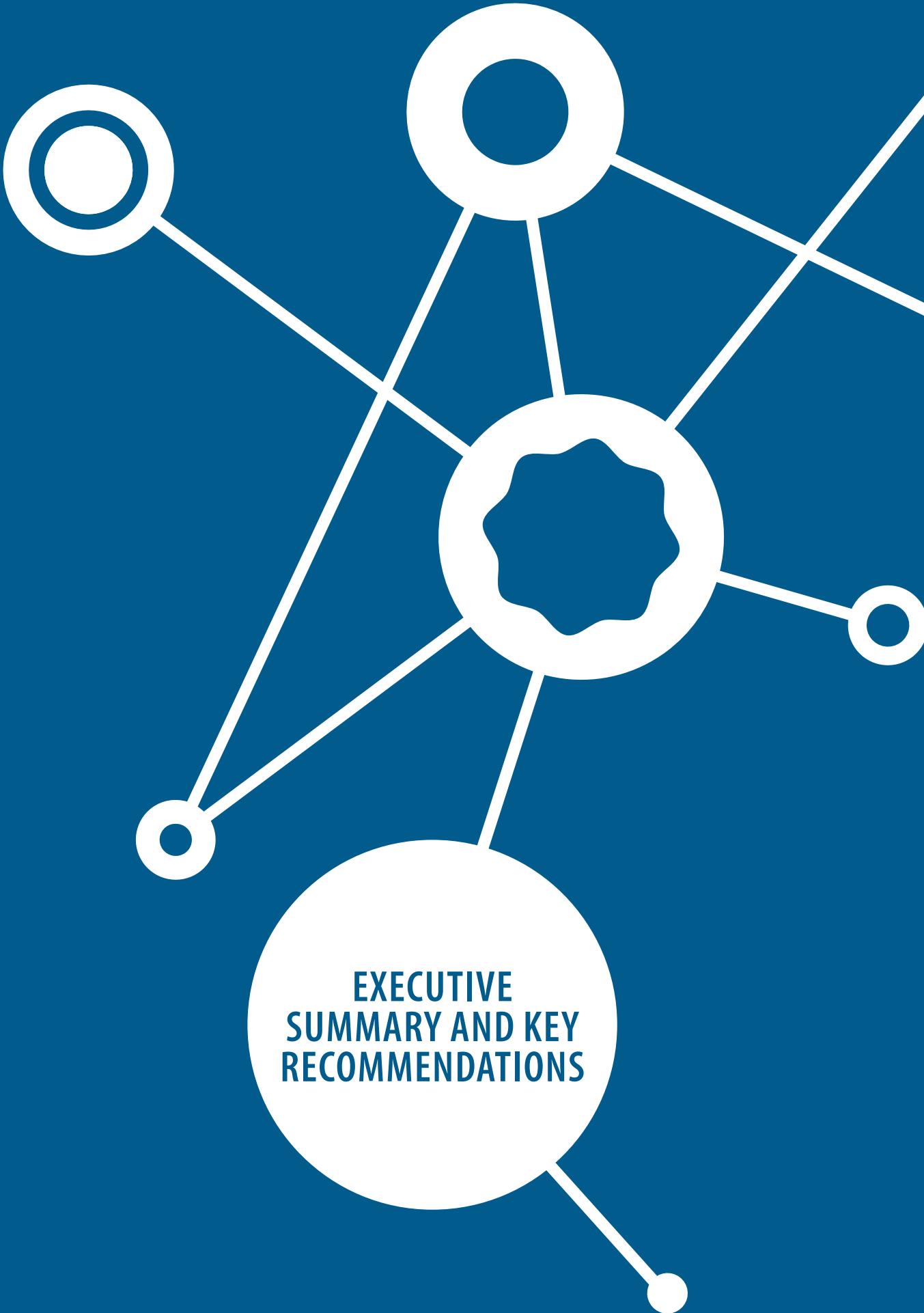
The university is located in the centre of Rome, in one of the most beautiful and historically rich areas of the whole city. LUMSA strives to promote an overall education of the person and for this reason, the university devotes special care to its students and their professional and human education through constant direction and tutoring, and procedures designed to give full expression to their right to be engaged in study.

LUMSA offers four main subject areas of teaching and research activities: economics, humanities, languages and law. LUMSA has 20 years' experience in organising an Erasmus Italian language course and it provides Italian degree courses at

undergraduate and postgraduate levels, including master's and PhD.

LUMSA pays great attention to new professional requirements and to the emerging needs of the world of work, such as multiculturalism and integration of foreign citizens, and it carries out research at national and international level. These activities lead to innovative teaching practices. LUMSA is a Catholic university with a particular focus on development, showing students what they can do and be. This outlook defines the university; our key goal is the integration of graduates into society and the workforce. The qualifications issued by LUMSA have legal equivalence to those of Italian state universities.





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The coLAB project was established by five higher education institutions (HEIs) across four European countries to create an entry point for refugees with professional experience and qualifications into work in higher education (HE). The project both supported a marginalised group facing multiple barriers to suitable employment, as well as making available to students and colleagues in HE the new knowledge, perspectives and experiences which refugees can bring.

A total of 28 refugees, from 14 different countries, took part in coLAB. They had 20 different academic specialisms between them, ranging from archaeology to journalism, cultural mediation to political science.

This toolkit distils the lessons learned from coLAB to assist other educational institutions and professionals make the most of skills that refugees can bring, providing guidance on co-ordination, recruitment, preparation and communication. The second half of the toolkit details coLAB teaching activities and their impact on the refugee tutors, participating students and host academics.

Coordinating support around refugee tutors was a substantial task. Practical issues arose from human resources, payroll and legal processes and demands. These required working through, and so good relationship building among colleagues and the development of intercultural skills. A further consideration, especially for a project dealing with refugees, was the need to put in place pastoral support.

coLAB partners worked closely with external organisations specialising in support for refugees to recruit refugee tutors, and formulate adverts for maximum impact. Only refugees with the right to work were recruited, and it was important to be clear with the candidates that they would teach a course and not tell their story, although their experiences could illustrate elements of the course.

Preparation for teaching consisted of a first stage of meetings with host tutors, where the aims of the project were explained, as well as information on the educational context and expectations of students. The second stage was some form of training to prepare refugee tutors for the role. Finally, before refugee tutors went into teaching sessions, they prepared lesson plans and materials with host tutors. The ground was prepared for a positive reception of refugee tutors in participating organisations by raising the profile of coLAB and its aims through newsletters and other communication channels.

The types of teaching support which participating HEIs required varied greatly across the project, and refugee tutors were flexible in meeting these. Their work took different forms, for example: leading workshops, giving lectures, even teaching full courses of 20 to 30 hours. In terms of subject delivery, refugee tutors imparted a range of knowledge and skills: from diversity management to filming, communication strategies to brand ethics and cultural appropriation.

Evidence of the impact of coLAB was collected via a range of sources, but primarily via teacher diaries, interviews and focus groups with refugee tutors, staff and students. Students reported increased knowledge and understanding as a result of engaging with refugee tutors. Students were introduced to previously unknown perspectives, and as a result, were able to question more critically the world around them, and developed a greater sense of solidarity with refugees. For their part, refugee tutors felt more included in their host society – the experience had given them a greater sense of self-worth. This was mirrored by positive comments from host professionals about the project. For example, they stated that they would consider rehiring their refugee tutor in future.



*"I appreciated that I was not asked to tell my story during the first interview. It was like a job interview. I talked about my experiences, what I could do. I was chosen because I was capable, and this is the first step towards building self-confidence. I needed it."*

- Refugee teacher interview, UCA



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO ENGAGE REFUGEE TUTORS

Partners have provided specific recommendations for implementing coLAB under each of the sections in the toolkit. Here, we present some overarching recommendations for organisations who are planning to implement the coLAB approach themselves:

Hiring refugee teachers requires **flexibility** and **cooperation** from a range of colleagues. It is important that your organisation's leaders are on board to promote the project, and make things happen:

- Identify the organisational goals that coLAB helps leaders to achieve, or the issues (for example, a shortage of specialists) it helps them to resolve, as a way of persuading leaders of the benefits of the project, and so making them advocates for it

There are a number of organisations that specialise in working with refugees, whose **support and advice** you can draw on when planning and implementing the project:

- Build a network of stakeholders around the project who have an interest in helping refugees into work – once a core group are involved, they can raise awareness of the opportunities you are providing, enlist the support of other organisations and will be aware of forums where you can promote the project to others

**Joint planning** between host professionals and refugee tutors is a form of collaborative professional development, and as such, extremely beneficial to both parties:

- Set out a detailed plan of induction and preparation, which involves joint planning, and other collaborative activities, such as observation and feedback. To make this easier for tutors, you may introduce tools such as planning frameworks and observation schedules, which tutors can complete. This will help them make explicit their thinking and learning

Deployment of refugee teachers needs **thorough planning** because, for example, refugees need to report to authorities, or may have a limited time in their current location:

- Begin the planning of deployment by first being clear about the availability of refugee tutors, and then use the flexibilities and different forms of delivery to identify the ones most suited to the specific refugee tutor. Also have contingency plans in place in case of a refugee tutor no longer being available

**Understanding the impact** of a project is not only important to satisfy funders, it can also help promote and improve the project. Involving practitioners in evidence gathering and analysis is also an element of effective professional development:

- Devise an evaluation strategy at the outset of the project. Direct student feedback is important, and there may be existing questionnaires etc where students can be asked additional questions about the project. For coLAB we also recommended tutors complete a teacher's log. This not only means evidence is gathered, but also supports practitioners to deepen their understanding of developing practice



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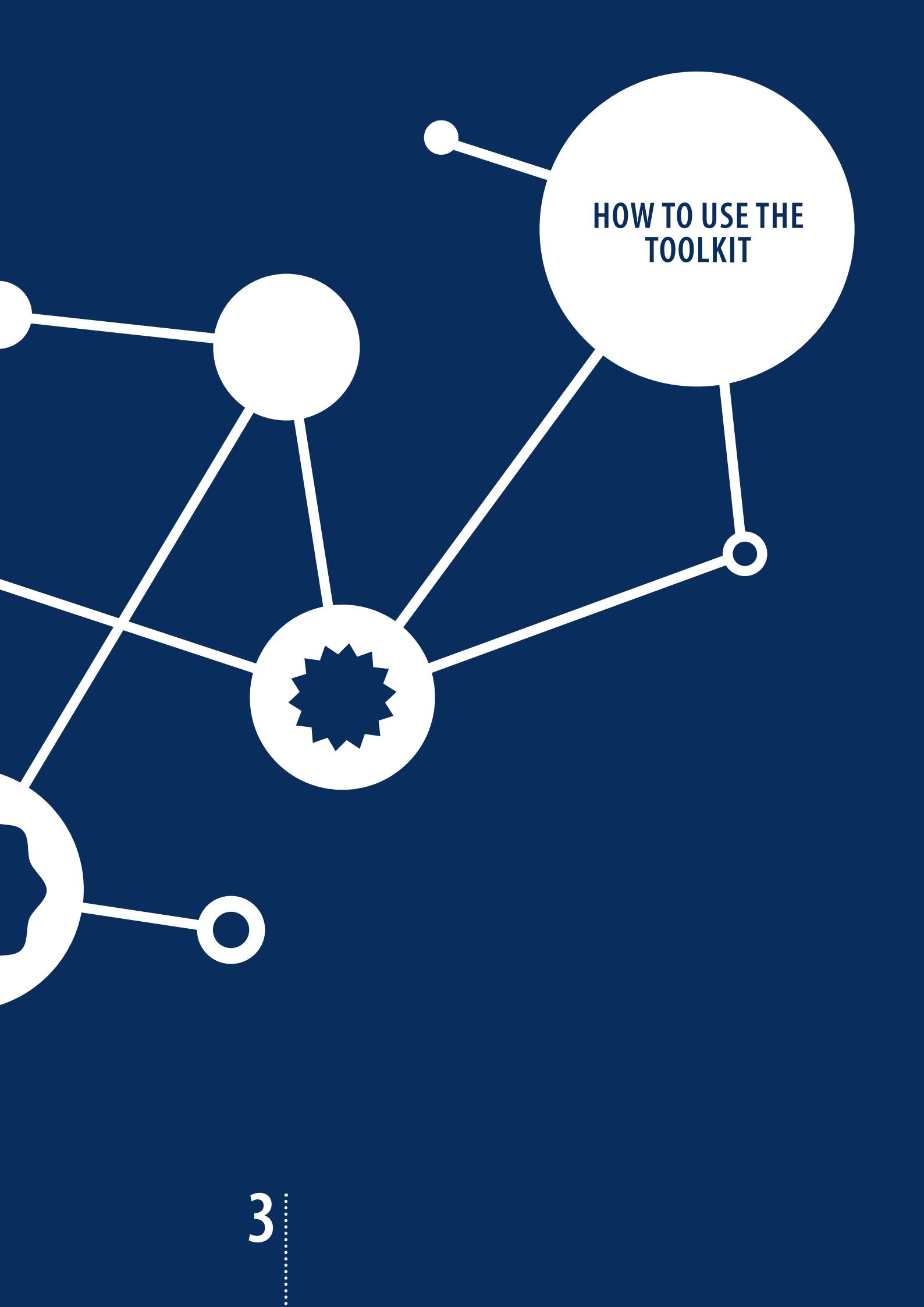
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## NOTE



## HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

# HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

The coLAB toolkit has been developed to help share the knowledge generated by the project team in an accessible, practical format. It is designed to offer focused, solutions-driven recommendations for those seeking to advance mutual understanding and inclusive practices by employing refugee tutors at universities.

Although the toolkit is primarily aimed at those working in the higher education sector – course designers, teachers, academic leaders, policy-makers, human resources – it may also be of value to those working in other educational or work-based learning settings.

The toolkit is written in Plain English, and set out in an easy to navigate format. In the first section, the partners reflect on how they approached the planning, coordination and communication of the project's activities. It tackles areas such as how to recruit and integrate tutors with refugee backgrounds, building communication strategies around teaching activities and embedding inclusivity into the curriculum. Each chapter concludes with a list of key recommendations, or points arising from the activities.

The second half offers a narrative account from each partner detailing the teaching activities that were delivered and their impact on the refugee tutors, participating students and host academics. Consideration is also given to the effect the project has had at an institutional level. Throughout, the toolkit makes reference to case studies, testimonies and relevant documentation. These can be found in the digital appendix on [www.colab-disco.com/appendix](http://www.colab-disco.com/appendix)

The intention of the toolkit is for its readers to take away some of the ideas presented, and have the freedom to build on them in order to create more new ways of tackling the inequality and prejudice that can accompany migration.

*"I felt like my role was to expose the situation I know. It's important in times of misinformation. By having a better understanding of the context, students are showing more acceptance towards people coming from [my place of origin]."*

- Refugee teacher interview, IHECS



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The four terms immediately below, and their definitions, are taken from the project objectives set out in the Council of Europe's Competences for Democratic Culture framework (<https://rm.coe.int/16806ccc0c>).

<b>Mutual understanding and respect</b>	Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices; knowledge and critical understanding of the self
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<b>Social competences</b>	Responsibility; self-efficacy; tolerance of ambiguity; autonomous learning skills; skills of listening and observing; empathy; flexibility and adaptability; linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills; co-operation skills; conflict resolution skills
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<b>Civic competences</b>	Civic-mindedness; analytical and critical thinking skills; knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication; knowledge and critical understanding of the world: law, human rights, culture, cultures, religion, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability
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<b>Fundamental values</b>	Valuing: human dignity and human rights; cultural diversity; democracy, justice, fairness, equality, the rule of law
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The following terms, and their definitions, are chosen by the authors of this toolkit.

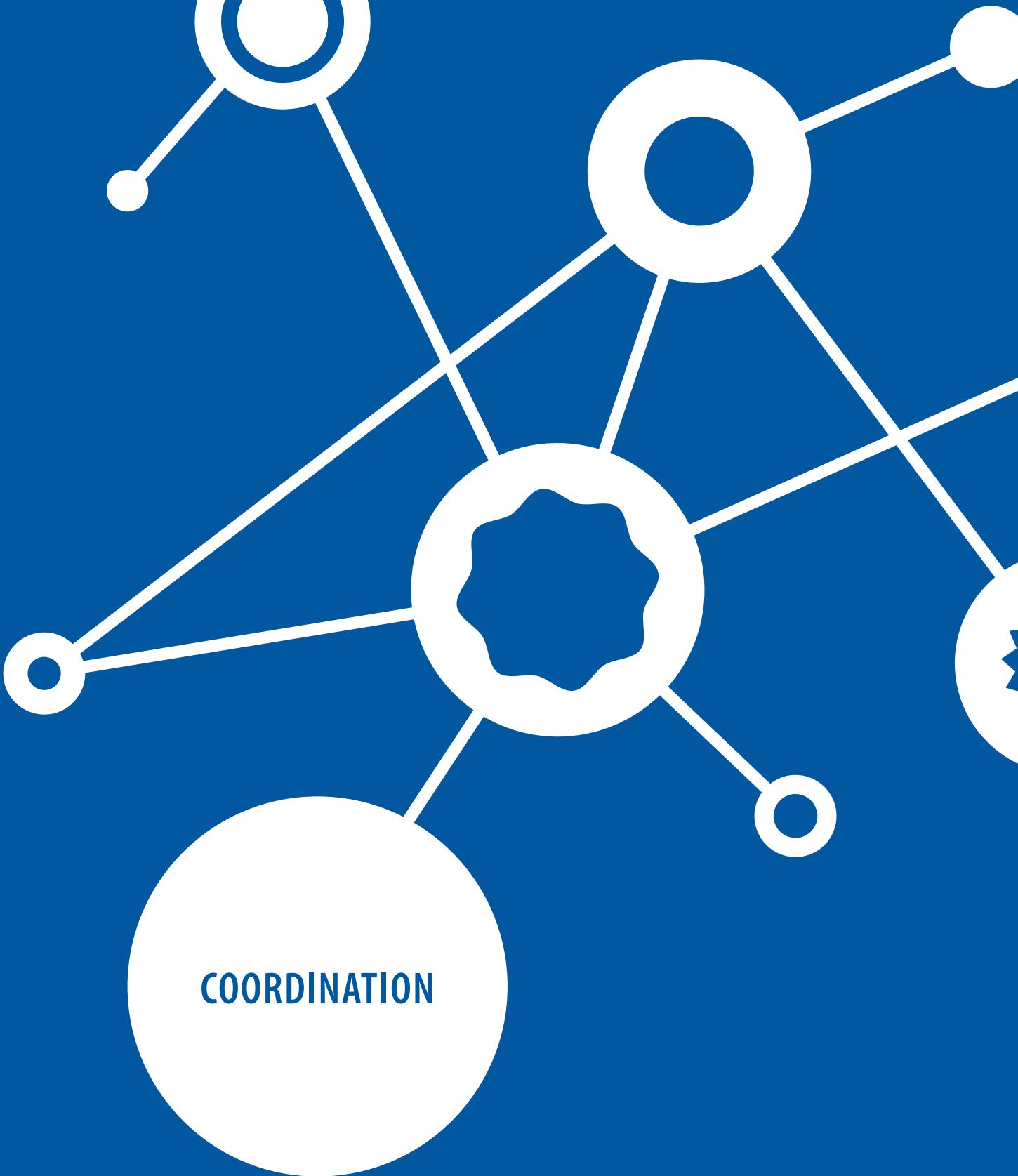
<b>Refugee</b>	Someone who is seeking asylum or has been granted refugee status. "Someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so." (UNHCR – <a href="https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/">https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/</a> )
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<b>Diversity and inclusivity</b>	A range of backgrounds, ethnicities and cultures are represented (adapted from the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission's definition of "diverse": <a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/secondary-education-resources/useful-information/glossary-terms">www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/secondary-education-resources/useful-information/glossary-terms</a> )
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<b>Intercultural dialogue</b>	An open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's global perception (Adapted from the Council of Europe's definition: <a href="https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/concept_EN.asp">https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/concept_EN.asp</a> )
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## NOTE



# COORDINATION

In order to deliver a project of this nature it is helpful to divide the coordination into two roles. There is some overlap in the responsibilities, and the process requires a collaborative approach, but the first set of activities are administrative, and the second pedagogical.

The administrative tasks concern the recruitment of the refugee participants; organising the financial and contractual requirements; disseminating the evaluation tools; gathering data; developing a communication strategy; and managing the project's budget.

The pedagogical tasks focus on delivering preparatory teaching workshops for the in-coming tutors; matching the refugee tutors to relevant teaching areas; acting as a conduit between refugee tutors and host academics; helping with lesson planning; and supporting future career planning and professional development.

Each of these activities will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters. However, the smooth functioning of the project coordination is dependent upon having strong working relationships with institutional stakeholders, including payroll, human resources, academic leaders and communications teams. Building these relationships may take more time and resources if you are working in a context where a project of this sort is new or unusual, so make sure you plan ahead.

Coordination of the project must be considered in the context of the complex, often traumatic experience that many of the participants will have gone through as a result of being displaced or exiled. Due to the legal restrictions placed on asylum seekers before their claims have been approved, a number will also have experienced long periods of unemployment – with the obvious impact on their confidence and sense of well-being. Refugees are often on limited incomes, and have inflexible demands placed on their time, so be prepared to fit your schedules around their availability – and, when necessary, to reschedule at short notice.

As the co-ordinators are the main point of contact that the refugee tutor will have with the academic institution, it is important to consider the pastoral implications of this role. In addition, both the administrative and pedagogical coordinators should have good intercultural skills.

Creating an environment where refugee tutor feels supported and comfortable is fundamental. This can be achieved by providing opportunities for the refugee tutor cohort to come together both professionally and socially; inviting refugee tutors to events within the university; scheduling one to one tutorials. Ultimately, having a specialist therapist to be able to refer participants to is advisable. Co-ordinators would also benefit from additional support in this area, for example, undertaking preparatory sessions on "working with refugees or victims of trauma" via NGOs or charities from the specialist sector.

You will need at least two people to carry out the coordination tasks, and perhaps a third to act as administrative assistant, depending on the workload. The total working time required will fluctuate depending on how many refugee tutors are employed, but plan for an average of at least five hours per week for the duration of the project.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Administrative and pedagogical staff should work closely together and be prepared to be flexible, according to the needs of the participants
- Discuss with university management how the coordination roles will be recognised and valued within your institution
- Involve host colleagues as much as possible; explain to them how to make the best use of the refugee tutors' expertise
- Welcome refugee tutors into the life of the university through invitations to academic and social activities
- Project coordinators should take a preparatory workshop or read online guidance on working with refugees and cases of trauma
- Identify a specialist therapist in case of the need for referral





## RECRUITMENT AND PREPARATION

# RECRUITMENT

We devised a recruitment strategy that enabled partners to find applicants whose expertise would resonate with the specific subjects and courses on offer at their institutions. The language of the advertisement was accessible and clearly articulated the project's aims and objectives, in addition to the specific criteria that applicants needed to meet. In order to disseminate the call within the target audience, the partners collaborated with local charities and third sector organisations who specialised in supporting refugees and asylum seekers.

These groups were also able to advise on the wording of the recruitment literature so that it conformed to national employment legislation. It may be necessary to contact a wide range of these organisations at the planning stage, because some might not have sufficient time and resources to contribute to the project.

Participants were selected through a two-stage application process. Initially, by submitting a CV and covering letter, then undergoing a telephone or face to face interview. To comply with national legislation, partners could only hire those tutors who could demonstrate that they had the right to work.

It is important to be clear with candidates from the outset that they will teach a course and not tell their story, although they will be able to talk about their experience to illustrate elements of the course. Prior teaching experience may not be necessary, but this depends on how flexible your institution is, and to what extent host teachers are able to support the refugee tutors in delivering courses.

Host teachers need to be involved from the start of the process to make sure that candidates' knowledge matches the content of the course. Good communication between the project coordinators and university admin offices is also important, because you may need to draw up new or unfamiliar contracts for the refugee tutors.

It's useful to think of recruitment as an ongoing process: suitable candidates might drop out, or might be waiting for a decision on their asylum claim that would later enable them to work.

A common arrangement was to employ refugee tutors as casual teaching staff - on an hourly rate or a self-employed basis. Many universities have similar schemes for visiting professional tutors, which can be adapted. Using an established role helps integrate refugee tutors into the academic community, with comparable rates of pay, access to university libraries and to email accounts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Talk to course leaders to identify specific courses, topics and fields for refugee tutors
- Involve host teachers in the recruitment process and time the selection process before the start of the academic year, so host academics are able to build the project into their schedules
- Seek guidance from internal finance and human resources departments and external social security advisors before recruitment begins
- Design a recruitment strategy in consultation with those organisations who work directly with refugees and migrants
- Produce advertising materials that describe the role in a straightforward, clear manner and include background information on the project
- To facilitate integration, choose a job title that is closely aligned to those already operating in the institution
- During candidate interviews, do not ask people for their refugee story, and make sure the terms of employment are clear and understood
- Be prepared to recruit more refugee teachers after the project begins



# PREPARATION

The first step in the preparation phase was to hold meetings for all the refugee and host tutors. Participants were given background information about the project and the institution they would be working in. UCA, for instance, took refugee tutors on a campus tour and explained the wider educational context of their host country, including students' expectations, to them.

Such measures enabled the refugee and host teachers to get to know one another and start matching up peoples' skills and knowledge with appropriate courses. These initial meetings launched an ongoing process of discussion – through further meetings, phone conversations or communication via email – about plans for specific courses and lessons.

The second step was to give the refugee tutors some form of training. The refugee tutors at LCC, for example, took part in an induction workshop adapted from an existing staff development course called Thinking Teaching. This 2-day workshop gave the participants an opportunity to understand how the institution worked, but also higher education in the UK. The group were able to discuss their expectations about teaching in the UK, reflect on prior learning experience, and how it was likely to differ from LCC. This point was particularly important due to LCC being an arts institution where the teaching style is informal, and the relationship between the academic and student is more negotiated.

Participants at LCC also delivered a 10-minute micro teaching session on a subject of their choice on day 2. This gave them an opportunity to try something in a safe space and get feedback from peers. This was particularly important in confidence building for those who had not taught before. They were given a lesson plan template and encouraged to try new strategies such as incorporating storytelling or object-based activities into their micro-teach.

At LUMSA, refugee tutor joined a cycle of seminars on university teaching. Each refugee tutor took part in at least two seminars, during which they were told how

their teaching would fit into the wider course. They were given tips on how to interact with young adults, as well as information about how to comply with institutional practices and the project requirements. These seminars were organised at different times, depending on refugee tutors' availability and level of experience. This was time-consuming but also allowed to devote the proper time to discussion, questions, and doubts to be solved.

These sorts of initial meetings and training sessions helped build the refugee tutors' confidence and gave them a support network.

The final step was the discussion and planning of the courses themselves. Through these conversations, refugee and host teachers drew up lesson plans and gathered teaching materials. It also gave refugee tutors the opportunity to ask questions about teaching styles, classroom culture and student expectations. In some cases, refugee tutors were invited to sit in on lessons and observe, although they were also told that their teaching style didn't necessarily have to conform to what others were doing.



*"As the situation in Syria is a topical issue, the workshop was full of information from different sources.*

*Thanks to [the refugee teachers'] personal experience of it, we could understand the situation from counter perspectives."*

- Student interview, IHECS

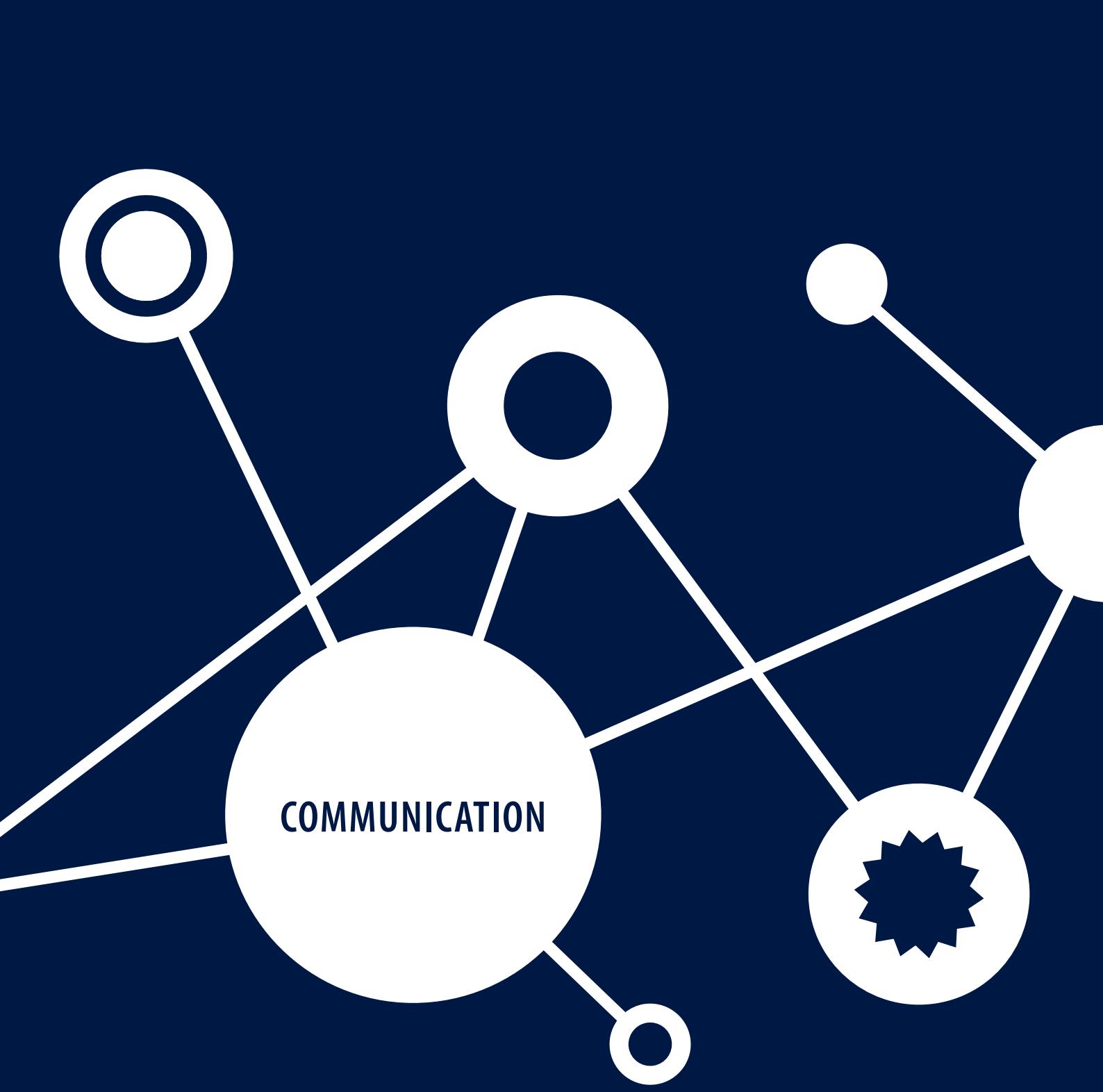
## RECOMMENDATIONS



- Create a formal space for refugee and host participants to meet each other, with ice-breakers at the beginning of the meeting
  - Include practical and discussion activities to model inclusive and differentiated teaching strategies
  - Training should also introduce participants to the university and the wider educational system
  - Make space for a social event or activity so that colleagues can establish connections inside and outside the institution
  - Introduce a member of staff who specialises in teaching and learning as a key point of contact and explain what support the university can offer to refugee tutors
  - Be clear about what tasks the refugee tutors are delivering, and give enough time to discuss and negotiate what will be delivered
  - Preparation of teaching activities also means helping refugee tutors develop their self-confidence

NOTE





**COMMUNICATION**

# COMMUNICATION

Communication about the project, its aims and its progress can be divided into two types, internal and external.

## Internal communication

Keeping colleagues and students informed about the project helps build institutional support for the activities, which could be leveraged for future project funding. It can also encourage staff and students to get more involved, and helps further the aim of integrating refugee tutors into the wider academic community.

Project updates can be given at institutional meetings or included in internal newsletters. Good practice can also be shared at academic conferences, which will help identify institutions who might collaborate on future project activities.

Among the techniques used by the coLAB coordinators were: regular updates in university newsletters; working with the university publicity office to produce an informative website; encouraging journalism students to interview refugee tutors and disseminate the report to the wider student body; producing a short film containing interviews with participants, and footage of the teaching sessions. UCA, for example, ran profiles of refugee tutors in the internal university journal and worked with student associations to raise awareness of issues around migration and refugees.

Another important technique is to approach colleagues informally, over coffee or at staff meetings and social events, to tell them about the project. This is more effective than email, because staff inboxes are often overloaded.

Also consider how widely you want to communicate about the project, and at what point. At IHECS a decision was taken not to inform students until the refugee tutors appeared in their classrooms. This was to avoid bias in the behaviour of the students involved, but it was not well received, as students felt they'd have benefited from advance notice.

## External communication

Raising wider awareness of the project is a good way to find potential collaborators - like charities and NGOs who work with refugees, as mentioned in the previous chapter - and it can further the aims of integration and meaningful intercultural dialogue.

Websites (like the coLAB blog <https://www.colab-disco.com>) and email updates can spread awareness of the project among the wider public; university publicity departments may be able to help with this. Representatives of the project - refugee tutors, students or host teachers - can also take part in public events or academic conferences that discuss relevant issues. LUMSA, for instance



hosted a film screening and discussion, and is exploring the possibility of refugee tutors attending a meeting with the Pope on the occasion of the university's 80th anniversary.

Project coordinators can also try to arrange media coverage: interviews with participants, articles authored by them, and so on. Again, university publicity departments may be able to help with issuing a press release or finding media contacts.

This sort of external communication raises a couple of ethical questions. One is about safety: does publicity present any risk to the refugee tutors, or their families back home? Before any action is taken, it is essential to discuss publicity with the refugee tutors so that they understand its context, and the possibility that material might be viewed anywhere in the world. Where appropriate, you might want to take steps to protect people's identities.

Another question is about integration, what that means, and how it might be achieved. Is there a risk of presenting refugees as a group separate from the rest of society? Might the participants feel they are being tokenised? How could that be avoided?

At the same time, good coverage of the project can be life-changing for participants – so use your judgement and make sure people are consulted.



*"I feel it is an outstanding experience that I needed to boost my self-confidence. I also feel I can contribute in raising awareness about many issues related to human rights, equality, women's empowerment in a country like Yemen.*

*I feel a responsibility to raise the awareness of these students, who admitted that they hadn't heard about Yemen, and encourage them to go and explore and link to the world."*

– Refugee tutor diary, LCC

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Devise a communications strategy at the beginning of the project
- Involve the refugee tutors in making decisions about what should be done
- Involve your institution by giving information to staff and students
- Organise public events with like-minded organisations and take part in academic conferences
- Contact the local press, television or radio about potential coverage
- Create an online project platform, with a blog and social media accounts
- Plan video content using interviews with participants and footage of the lessons



## NOTE

*"I am convinced that talking about this experience changes the images of and preconceived ideas about migrants. Giving media interviews allows me as an individual to show people that we do not come from another universe, and that we, like them, want to develop and move forward in life."*

- Refugee teacher interview, UCA



# TEACHING ACTIVITIES

## Haute Ecole Galilée-IHECS

At IHECS, there were two types of teaching activities. Refugee tutors would intervene in either a course or a workshop. Courses are taught in a lecture theatre to groups of 40 to 400 students. Workshops are given in smaller rooms to groups of around 20 students, and generate more interactions between students and teaching staff. Some refugee tutors contributed occasionally – usually two sessions in a course or a couple of days in a workshop – while others would appear weekly throughout the semester.

When the intervention was short, the refugee tutor would be in charge of teaching a specific topic within a larger course given by the host teacher. For the weekly interventions, refugee and host teacher would co-teach the whole course.

For short interventions, all the preparation would be done before the start. For longer contributions, refugee teachers would work regularly and adapt their sessions to students' needs, with feedback given by the host teachers.

## London College of Communication (LCC)

At LCC, the refugee tutors taught across undergraduate and master's level courses in communication design, journalism, public relations and media communications. The hours of teaching varied from a single, two-hour session within communication and media, to over 30 hours of teaching for one participant across several courses in the design school. Refugee tutors were paired with a member of the course team to help them plan sessions, get to know the course content and the level students were working at. This support extended to the teaching sessions, with the course teacher either joining the class or co-delivering elements of it, as agreed by the refugee teacher.

The refugee teachers were encouraged to explore object-based learning, image and storytelling as teaching and learning tools during the Thinking Teaching course (see the Preparation chapter). These elements were incorporated into their teaching sessions and included photographic learning cards to elicit empathy and discussion; short films and visual presentations as starting points for lectures/seminars; structured discussion-based activity; image analysis to develop critical thinking; and practical studio demonstration and one-to-one teaching.

Topics covered during the teaching period included an introduction to filming with first year journalism students; brand ethics and cultural appropriation in graphic communication; distant suffering and the reporting of conflict in journalism and media communications; research ethics and interview strategies for students undertaking empirical research projects in media communications; and humanitarian communications and NGOs within public relations. All teaching content drew on the refugee tutors' experience and expertise in their field and provided a unique lens and deep learning experience for the students they taught.



*"The more students are exposed to different types of voices, the more they will make sure that what they produce when they move into industry is inclusive [and] embraces other cultures, bringing different looks and feels in, bringing change, bringing new creativity. It's a way of creating empathy, it's a way of creating understanding of other places and other experiences."*

- Host tutor interview, LCC



## Université Clermont Auvergne (UCA)

At UCA, the refugee teachers taught courses lasting between 20 and 30 hours in intercultural communication, communication strategies, international trade, and the contemporary Arab world. The courses were integrated into the diplomas and the teachers also had to organise exams and to give some grades. A teaching unit, called "from migration to integration", was created specifically for the project, to raise students' awareness of migration issues.

Courses were held on a weekly basis, with two or four hours of instruction over a ten-week period. Others were organised in groups because the teachers did not live close by; they then worked one or two days a week, for several weeks, with the same students. The teachers had groups of between 20 and 60 people in them. Interventions took the form of courses, workshops, conferences, and so on.

Throughout the courses, interactions took place mainly with the project coordinator, but also with the host teachers, who were there to answer logistical questions - such booking audio-visual equipment - but also pedagogical questions before and after the lessons, in order to readjust in order to readjust the material. Making the time to talk was important.



## Università di Roma LUMSA

Refugee teachers were mainly involved as experts in regular academic courses, at both undergraduate and graduate level. They were hosted by permanent teaching staff, during their regular courses. Interdisciplinary seminars covered specific themes, such as prejudice (part of a social psychology course) and intercultural education (in an education course). They mainly took part in courses related to psychology, education, sociology and social work. In one case two refugee tutors also led a workshop on diversity management, in an executive master's course.

Most sessions were in pairs, each lasting between 2 and 4 hours. Two refugee tutors usually took part in each lesson, and each course had several refugee tutors to allow students to interact with a range of people.

The lessons were mostly very interactive; this was a wonderful opportunity for students to ask questions about the personal and professional history of the refugees, which was a very important factor to counter discriminatory attitudes.

After the lesson, students were invited to comment freely on their experiences, in writing. Lessons were formally observed and host and refugee tutors made informal comments after the sessions. This was especially helpful in the first phase of the project, to monitor and improve the organisation of the lessons.

As a result of this monitoring, it was decided after a couple of months to divide the students psychology, communication and education into groups during their lessons, and after a general introduction, to allow discussion where everybody would be involved. This gave them the opportunity to work jointly with the refugee tutors on issues around multiculturalism in social services, media, and education.

The groups developed a questionnaire to assess attitudes and prejudices about refugees. For the questionnaire, a number of internationally-validated scales are going to be used, as well as open questions, to be analysed qualitatively.

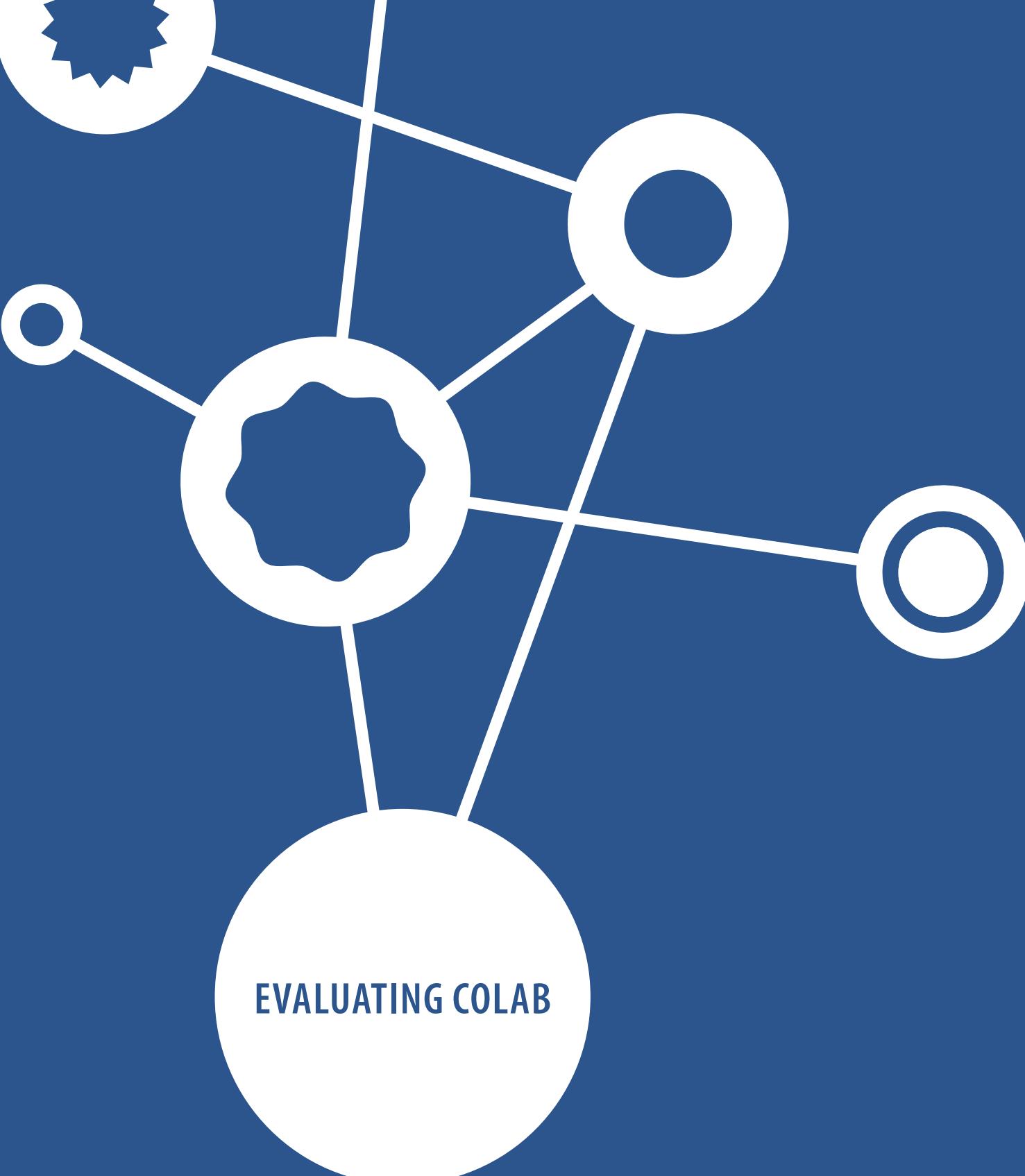
# RECOMMENDATIONS



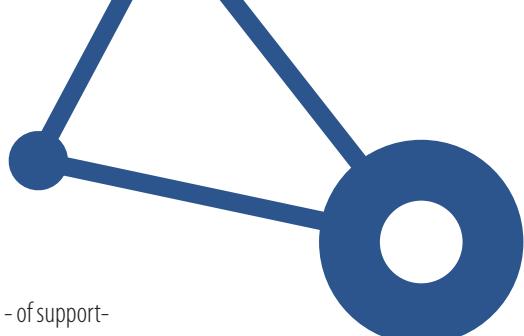
NOTE

*"Getting to share my knowledge with the student around this subject helped me to remember some other stuff. Teaching is also about learning, I have learned from the students. I have also learned how to be fun and serious at the same time and also learnt to be more [relaxed]."*

- Refugee tutor diary, LCC



## EVALUATING COLAB



## EVALUATING COLAB

Evaluation of educational programmes is as much an internal process – of supporting partners to reach their goals – as it is collecting data to “score” the success of the project against stated aims. At its best, based on the principle that we are all learning all the time, external assessment provides tools and encouragement for partners to engage with the outcomes data themselves. This helps us make sense of what is or is not working and why, and make changes accordingly.

In the case of coLAB, the central tool was an evaluation strategy which linked the project aims to the Council of Europe’s “Competences for Democratic Culture” framework (<https://rm.coe.int/16806ccc0c>). These were divided into social and civic competences, and fundamental values. Partners in coLAB aimed to develop these among participating staff and students:

Civic competences	Social competences	Fundamental values
Civic-mindedness; analytical and critical thinking skills; knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication; knowledge and critical understanding of the world: law, human rights, culture, cultures, religion, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability	Responsibility; self-efficacy; tolerance of ambiguity; autonomous learning skills; skills of listening and observing; empathy; flexibility and adaptability; linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills; co-operation skills; conflict-resolution skills	Valuing: human dignity and human rights; cultural diversity; democracy, justice, fairness, equality, the rule of law

Another key tool in the project was the teacher diary. Refugee participants were encouraged to complete these after each session they delivered. This was not only a data collection tool, but also supported refugee practitioners to consider how their sessions had helped them and their students develop competences in democratic culture. As well as questions on content and student reaction, the diary prompts asked practitioners to name one or two competences from each category that their session helped to promote, and how it had done that.

In addition, partners received interview and focus group schedules to help assess student, refugee practitioner and host professional responses to the intervention. Analysis of this information took place every two months, when partners submitted reports which used the data collected to answer the evaluation questions. As the project progressed, this enabled the evaluator to make recommendations on future good practice and data collection.

**OUTCOMES  
AND IMPACT**

# OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

## In general

coLAB aimed to foster a better understanding between local communities and refugees. Enhancing civic and social competences among all participants, building diversity and inclusivity into educational curricula, fostering mutual understanding and respect were among the multiple objectives coLAB has set and reached. The participants of coLAB have all gained from taking part in the activities.

## At Haute Ecole Galilée-IHECS

Students have shown great empathy towards refugee teachers. They have improved their knowledge and critical understanding of the world, particularly in terms of culture and history. Students said refugee teachers brought information of quality and interesting back stories making students more attentive. One student said it was the first time she could see someone from her community teaching. She felt represented and her community valued through this.

Host teachers felt that they have learnt a lot about the issues and topics brought by refugee teachers. Both host teachers and students said they would like to replicate this experience in the future, and they could see the added value of having refugee teachers sharing their knowledge.

Refugee tutors felt empowered and more confident about their skills. For two of them, the experience has fostered clearer plans for their professional future. One wants to start his own NGO while the other wants to start teaching permanently. Refugee teachers have shown great flexibility, adapting their teaching and support to the level of the students.

One positive outcome in Brussels is that during the project, another authority decided to fund activities locally. It allows IHECS to hire more refugee teachers until the end of 2019.



## **At London College of Communication (LCC)**

LCC students reported that the refugee teachers had brought alternative perspectives to their subject areas, and had particularly valued the authenticity when discussing global relations and ethical matters. As a result of the workshops, students said they felt empowered to critically question the world around them. One non-European student felt that by having sessions delivered by a tutor who was not from a western background, their own ideas and cultural influences felt validated in the classroom. Other students reported that the experience had inspired them to pursue specific career paths.

From the position of the refugee tutors, the project provided a platform to support their personal and professional development. The impact that the activities had on their confidence and sense of well-being was immense. Many joined the project having experienced periods of unemployment in the UK, or working in roles for which they were over-qualified. Following the teaching activities, they reported that they felt their professional identity and self-worth had been uplifted. What came through strongly was the sense that they were helping to inform and inspire young people about issues they knew very little about. They also reported feeling more connected to the local community.

Since delivering their sessions, one has gone on to teach summer school at another university; another is applying for permanent role within UAL; and another applying for postgraduate study, also at UAL.

One of the risks for projects that rely on one-off funding from external sources is the sustainability of the activities. A positive outcome at LCC was the willingness among participating academic staff and senior management to commit to the project on a longer-term basis. A survey revealed that all the academics who participated in coLAB would consider re-hiring their refugee tutor for the following academic year, and many would be prepared to fund their salaries from their own course budgets.

## **At Université Clermont Auvergne (UCA)**

Since the start of the project, two refugee tutors at UCA have found work. One has had a part-time contract renewed and one has created his own business.

Most of the refugee tutors drew on their own experiences to deliver their courses. The students felt that there was an authenticity to the teachers' contributions that allowed them to learn differently. Through their exchanges during the course, and informally outside it, students had access to cultures and worldviews they did not previously know about. It is a form of internationalism at home.

For students and professionals who have been in contact with refugee teachers, we note a greater openness and empathy towards migrants. The results of the project should now be made more widely known in order to have an impact on people who have not met the refugee tutors. This will be one of the objectives of a documentary film produced by UCA.

Thanks to the project's publicity activities, members of the host community are also beneficiaries of coLAB. Hearing that refugees teach at UCA encourages people to reflect on their opinions about refugees and migrants in general.

Since March 2019, UCA has been a member of the French migrants in higher education network (MEnS).



*"Through this project I understood the need for change and innovation - not just in our teaching, but also in how the university deals with the issue of migration and refugees. We must offer students a wider way to understand the world. I hope the next step is to have more and more universities becoming "refugee friendly". I spoke with a number of colleagues from different universities in Italy and they were all enthusiastic about the idea of having refugees teaching at academic level. I hope this experiment will be replicated by other academic institutions."*

- Host teacher interview, LUMSA

## NOTE

### At Università di Roma LUMSA

One major outcome of the project was recognition of the need to show solidarity with refugees. This attitude developed not only among students, but also among teachers who hosted or dealt with the refugee tutors, as well as the administrative staff who had the opportunity to get involved in the project. Refugee teachers developed a stronger sense of self-worth.

A further outcome is the development of new contacts and partnerships with non-governmental organisations, non-profit organisations and other groups we contacted during the project.

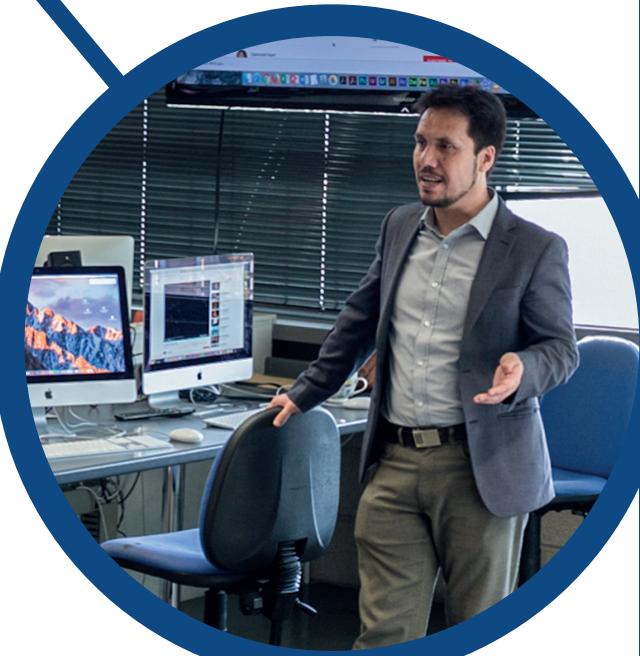
As a result of our project the Italian universities' network for lifelong learning, RUIAP, has decided to develop further activities aimed at promoting the integration of refugees and migrants. This will involve raising universities' awareness of integration, promoting ways of recognising university credits and previous degrees held by refugees and migrants, and combining these activities with RUIAP's other work.

Finally, some of LUMSA's teaching staff are now working to promote the university as "refugee and migrant-friendly".



*"I am very happy and proud  
to be part of this project. It is a serious  
step for me in this field. It is a win-win  
situation. It is true that I'm teaching  
master's students but in return I'm also  
learning from them. It is a rich experience."*

- Refugee tutor diary, UCA



*"Participating in this experience gave me a better understanding of the younger generation in Europe."*

- Refugee teacher interview, IHECS

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE PROJECT COORDINATORS AND TOOLKIT CONTRIBUTORS

**Paula Benevene, PhD** is associate professor of work and organisational psychology at Università di Roma LUMSA. She is the director of LUMSA's executive master's in human resource management. She is also on the board of RUIAP, the network of Italian universities for life-long education.

**Cecilia Brassier-Rodrigues** is an associate professor in communication at Université Clermont Auvergne. Her research focuses on the analysis of international mobility, from a communicative, intercultural and international perspective.

**Siobhan Clay** is an educational developer in the Teaching and Learning Exchange at University of the Arts London. Her role is focused on student experience and attainment agendas, working with academics to support inclusive pedagogies and curriculum development.

**Vivienne Francis** is a reader in social justice journalism and knowledge exchange at London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. Her work focuses on media representation and diversity. She is also a senior lecturer in journalism and publishing.

**Sophie Henrard** is head of international exchanges at Haute Ecole Galilée-IHECS. Her role is to develop an international network for students and staff. Her work also focuses on the development of international projects.

**Colin Isham, PhD** wrote the toolkit's executive summary. He is the director of Isham Education and Community, and specialises in project development and evaluation in the area of curriculum innovation and access to education.

**Laura Leprêtre** is a project manager and expert in education at IHECS Academy. She is the educational coordinator of the executive Master's in European public affairs and communication, on which she also teaches.

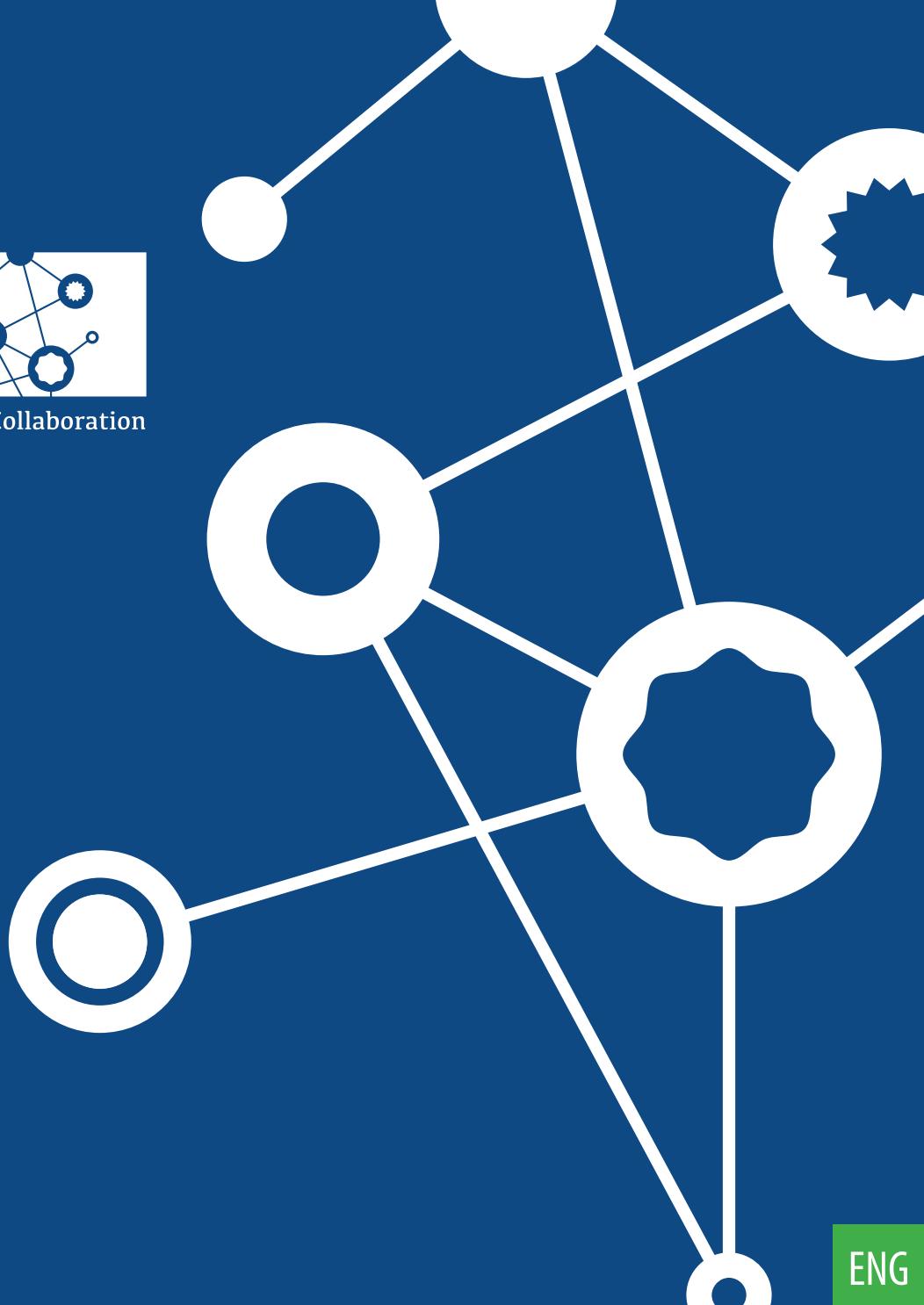
**Hélène Pochet** is project manager at Haute Ecole Galilée-IHECS. She develops social projects inside the institution, such as civic engagement and the integration of refugees into academia.

**Simona De Stasio, PhD** is associate professor of developmental and educational psychology at Università di Roma LUMSA. She works with Rome's department of educational and scholastic services as a trainer and supervisor for kindergarten teachers, and is co-founder of the Italian observatory on teachers' well-being.

**Daniel Trilling** edited the toolkit. He is an editor, author and journalism teacher based in London who writes about migration and nationalism for publications including the Guardian, London Review of Books and New York Times.



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