

Reading and Resources for Virtual Exchange & Blended Mobility

Introduction

Virtual Exchange (VE) refers to online learning initiatives and methodologies which engage learners in collaborative learning and interaction with partners from different cultural backgrounds as part of their study programs. Blended Mobility combines stages of online collaboration with short periods of physical mobility.

Robert O'Dowd (Professor at la Universidad de León, Spain) has curated this list of resources and readings about Virtual Exchange and Blended Mobility in higher education. If you have questions or wish to connect with Robert, you can email him at robert.odowd@unileon.es or find him on [LinkedIN](#) and Bluesky (@robodowd.bsky.social). This list is updated regularly, and suggested additions are welcome.

Robert's most recent monograph [Internationalising Higher Education and the Role of Virtual Exchange](#) was published by Routledge in 2023. You can also access an Open Access copy of the edited volume [Virtual Innovation and Support Networks](#) (2024) - Exploring the impact of Virtual Exchange in teacher education, co-edited by Robert and Margarita Vinagre.

Information for Universities and Management

Documents for International Offices and University Management

- [Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange: Handbook for International Relations Officers](#)
- [Stevens Initiative: Virtual Exchange Guide for Senior International Officers](#)
- [Example of a university's internationalisation strategy incorporating Virtual Exchange](#)
- [Joint position paper by the European Students' Union and the Erasmus Student Network on Virtual Exchange and Blended Mobility](#)
- [DAAD Research brief: Introducing Virtual Student Exchange in international university education - by Robert O'Dowd](#)
- [Strategic framework for the integration of Blended Mobility and Virtual Exchange in Higher Education Institutions by The Frames project](#)

University Webpages Promoting Virtual Exchange - Examples

- [Florida International University](#)
- [DePaul University, Chicago, USA](#)
- [Indiana University--Purdue University Indianapolis](#)

- [CEU Cardenal Herrera University, Spain](#)
 - [Universidad de Castilla la Mancha, Spain](#)
 - [Kibbutzim College of Education, Israel](#)
 - [The Center for Global Engagement at University Of Maryland, Baltimore County](#)
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Virtual Exchange Resources for Teachers

Support Documents for Teachers of Virtual Exchange

- [Train for Virtual Exchange: Explore The Stevens Initiative hub of virtual exchange training opportunities](#)
- [The FRAME's project's Toolkit for integration of Virtual Exchange in Higher Education](#)
- [Mentoring Handbook for Virtual Exchange Teachers](#)
- [EVALUATE Training manual for teachers](#)
- [The UNIC Handbook on Physical and Virtual Mobility](#)
- [Faculty Guide for COIL Course Development](#)
- [International Courses Guidelines for Implementation of Collaborative Online International Learning](#) developed by Susana Galant and Anya Glikman for the Kibbutzim College of Education
- [A Guide for Mediators in Synchronous Online Zoom Breakout Rooms](#) developed by the ViVEXELT project

Evaluation and Assessment Tools used with Virtual Exchange

- [International Cross-Cultural Experiential Learning Evaluation Toolkit](#)
 - [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture](#)
 - [Common Survey Items for Virtual Exchange Programs](#) (The Stevens Initiative)
 - [Common European Framework Of Reference For Languages](#)
 - [DigComp 2.2: The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens](#)
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Examples of Virtual Exchange in Practice

Examples of Virtual Exchanges and COIL Projects

- COIL projects at [the University of Coventry](#), UK
- COIL and VE projects from [DePaul University](#), USA
- COIL and VE projects at [Heilbronn University, Germany](#)
- COIL projects at the [University of VIC](#), Spain

- Virtual Exchange projects at [Indiana University Indianapolis](#), USA
 - The [Stevens Initiative](#) offers many 'impact stories' about Virtual Exchange programmes
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Research and Case Studies

Reports with Case Studies of Virtual Exchange in Universities

- [Frames Project \(2022\)](#) - Scenarios for the integration of Virtual Exchange in Higher Education
 - [EVOLVE Project Team \(2020\)](#) - Key drivers' perspectives on the institutional uptake of virtual exchange. Case Studies from 9 European HEIs
 - [Universities UK International \(2021\)](#) - Internationalisation at Home -- developing global citizens without travel
 - [Study of Virtual Exchange Schemes in ASEAN \(2022\)](#) - Prepared by Dr. Keiko IKEDA & Dr. Abdul Latiff AHMAD
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Funding Opportunities for Virtual Exchange

- [Norwegian Panorama Virtual Exchange/COIL Partnerships Initiative: U.S., Japan and South Korea](#)
 - [DAAD Germany: International Virtual Academic Collaboration \(IVAC\)](#)
 - [Dutch Ministry of Science, Education and Culture: Virtual International Collaboration Projects](#)
 - [Erasmus+: Virtual Exchanges with other Specific Regions](#) (The call for funding is published each year)
 - [U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of English Language Programs: Virtual Exchange Programs](#)
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Blended Mobility & Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs)

Blended mobility combines physical mobility with structured online collaboration (Virtual Exchange). The new Erasmus+ programme offers funding for Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs).

Resources on Blended Mobility

- [Information on Blended Intensive Programmes](#)
- [Free Database of BIP's](#)
- [Blended mobility implementation guide](#) for Erasmus+ higher education mobility KA131
- [Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programmes. Basic Toolkit](#)

- [The First Steps of Blended Mobility in European Higher Education: A Survey of Blended Intensive Programmes](#)

Examples of Blended Mobility Programmes

- [Examples of successful BIPs from the OeAD](#)
 - [Co-creating Urban Futures: Citizen Participation in Local Governance](#)
 - [Innovation in Foreign Language Education](#) - A Blended Intensive Programme by the University of León, Spain
 - [Democratic Memories in Global Perspective](#)
 - [Winter School- International & Comparative studies in Adult Education & Lifelong learning](#)
 - [NICE \(Network for Intercultural Competence to facilitate Entrepreneurship\)](#)
 - [Idea challenge: Biomedical engineering for global health](#)
 - [The CIVIS European University alliance offers a variety of blended courses](#)
 - [Example of a University explaining the BIP process to teaching staff](#)
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Platforms and Organizations

Virtual Exchange Platforms

X-Culture: A large-scale international experiential learning project involving over 3,500 MBA and business students from 100 universities and 40 countries every semester.

Conversifi: Connects foreign language learners with native speakers for on-demand language practice and cross-cultural exchange over video chat.

Soliya: The Connect Program is an online cross-cultural education program integrated into curriculum for young adults to develop 21st Century skills.

Sharing Perspectives: Developed for students at higher education institutions to promote discussion of current socio-political issues beyond national/cultural boundaries.

Teletandem: The online language learning tandem project by UNESP - Universidade Estadual Paulista, Brazil.

Cultura: An intercultural project connecting groups of students online to help them understand each other's culture.

Research and Innovation Projects on Virtual Exchange

INVITED project — Integrating Primary and Pre-school Virtual Exchange Projects into Language Teacher Education

Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange (EVE): A groundbreaking project enabling youth in Europe and the Southern Mediterranean to engage in meaningful intercultural experiences online.

VALIANT: An Erasmus+ KA3 European Policy Experiment exploring the impact of Virtual Exchange programmes for teachers and student teachers.

EVOLVE: An Erasmus+ KA3 project aiming to mainstream Virtual Exchange as an innovative form of collaborative international learning across disciplines in Higher Education.

INTENT: The Integrating Telecollaborative Networks in Higher Education project, financed by the European Commission (2011-2014), led to the foundation of the UNICollaboration organisation.

Organizations Supporting Virtual Exchange

UNICollaboration: The cross-disciplinary professional organisation for telecollaboration and virtual exchange in Higher Education.

The Stevens Initiative: An international effort to build global competence for young people in the US and MENA region through virtual exchange.

The SUNY COIL Center: One of the leading international organisations focused on the emerging field of Globally Networked Learning.

COIL Connect: Supports higher education institutions that have developed or are developing COIL VE programs.

The Virtual Exchange Coalition: Brings together various VE stakeholders and lobbies on behalf of virtual exchange globally.

Asia Pacific Virtual Exchange Association (APVEA): Established to promote virtual exchange initiatives in Asia.

Latin American COIL Network: Promotes practice and research on Collaborative Online International Learning in Latin American higher education.

Research and Impact Reports

Virtual Exchange Impact Reports

[Virtual Innovation and Support Networks: Exploring the impact of Virtual Exchange in teacher education](#) (2024) - VALIANT project group

[SUNY COIL Stevens Initiative Assessment](#) (2017) - SUNY COIL

[Evaluating Global Digital Education: Student Outcomes Framework](#) (2018) - Global Cities Inc.

[Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Impact Report 2018](#) (2019) - Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange

[Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Impact Report 2019](#) (2020) - Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange

[Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Impact Report 2020](#) (2021) - Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange

[Evaluating the Impact of Virtual Exchange on Initial Teacher Education: A European Policy Experiment](#) (2019) - The EVALUATE Group

[Virtual Exchange as Innovative Practice across Europe Awareness and Use in Higher Education](#) (2019) - EVOLVE

[The Impact of Virtual Exchange on Student Learning in Higher Education: EVOLVE Project Report](#) (2020) - EVOLVE

[The Impact of Virtual Exchange on Teachers' Pedagogical Competences and Pedagogical Approach in Higher Education](#) (2020) - EVOLVE

[Virtual Exchange Impact and Learning Report 2019](#) (2019) - Stevens Initiative

[Virtual Exchange Impact and Learning Report 2020](#) (2020) - Stevens Initiative

[Virtual Exchange Impact and Learning Report 2021](#) (2021) - Stevens Initiative

Articles and Further Reading

NAFSA article: Virtual Exchange 101 - A short [introductory article](#) on steps to keep in mind when introducing Virtual Exchange.

Virtual exchange: What are students signing up for? - Another [nice introductory article](#) to Virtual Exchange - authored by Hiba B. Ibrahim.

Virtual exchange and Internationalisation at Home: navigating the terminology - An EAIE [blog entry](#) by Robert O'Dowd and Jos Beelen.

Virtual Exchanges Promote Equity in Global Learning: [An article on the added value of Virtual Exchange](#) by Susan D'Agostino in Inside Higher Education.

From telecollaboration to virtual exchange: state-of-the art and the role of UNICollaboration in moving forward: An [article](#) by Robert O'Dowd on the origins of Virtual Exchange and its different models.

[Benefits of Collaborative Online International Learning Projects](#) by Deniz Gokcora - A short article outlining the advantages for teachers to use Virtual Exchange.

Online Bibliography of Virtual Exchange research by UNICollaboration: An online collaborative [bibliography](#) of research publications on Virtual Exchange.

A [bibliography](#) of the theme of **Virtual Exchange and Inclusion and Equity and VE in zones of conflict**.

Virtual Exchange Typology by Stevens Initiative: This [typology and glossary](#) is shared to improve understanding among virtual exchange practitioners.

Journal of Virtual Exchange: The open-access academic [journal](#) of the UNICollaboration organisation.

Publications about the International Virtual Exchange project:
<https://iveproject.org/mod/page/view.php?id=911>

Video Resources

[What is Virtual Exchange?](#)

[What is X-Culture?](#)

[What is the VALIANT project?](#)

[Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange: What did you learn from Virtual Exchange?](#)

[EVOLVE and Dr. Shannon Sauro: Critical Incidents in Virtual Exchange](#)

[What was the EVALUATE project?](#)