

CO-CREATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

ACTION ATELIER

I Living Labs: interdisciplinary and international cocreation to transform our regions

In the I Living labs the knowledge triangle (research -education – innovation) is integrated with entrepreneurship for smart and sustainable education and regions.

Students who participate in an E³UDRES² I Living Lab (or ILL) will develop personal future skills and (inter)disciplinary competences while becoming their own change agents in a smart and sustainable region. During the living labs students are challenged and supported to act as change agents transforming their neighbourhoods into smart and sustainable regions and contributing solutions to global challenges, the 3 main topics that are covered in the ILL are circular economy, active ageing and well-being and the human contribution to artificial intelligence.

During 6 weeks of I Living labs students work with interdisciplinary teams of students to create circular concepts for local companies and organisations through a design thinking process. Design sits prominently at the heart of the circular economy. It requires us to redesign everything: products, business models, cities and the linear systems that have lasted for the past centuries. According to the Ellen Mac Arthur Foundation a circular economy is based on three principles; eliminate waste and pollution, circulate materials and products and regenerate nature. All these principles are driven by design.

Students from bachelor and master programs in technology, business and humanities work together in mixed teams. Students enhance their future skills, such as dealing with ambiguity, system thinking and collaboration while creating new knowledge and solutions to wicked problems from the work field. Furthermore professionals of the work field can enhance their expertise within an I Living Lab as an external stakeholder. Participating in an I Living Lab means being in touch with an international network of knowledge and expertise and working together on wicked problems with social engagement. In an ILL a strong link between research, education, innovation and entrepreneurs is build. Before the transformation of higher education the connection to the latter group was often forgotten. While smaller companies nowadays need practical examples to stimulate their own entrepreneurship and solutions for these wicked problems regarding the global challenges they will eventually run into.

These I Living labs are part of the university of the future – called E³UDRES² an Erasmus + University Alliance. Students are given the chance to sharpen their ideas and to develop future skills. Students contribute also ideas concerning the future of Higher education and how it should develop the necessary skills for the fast changing work field .They also reach out ideas regarding this issue to every level of school policy, to other students or teachers, even to the school board. They can inspire each other and suggest improvements in their own Higher Education Institution to develop key competences for sustainable development. Through all I Living Labs we will cultivate a joint student community, to create involvement for social innovation.

In this Action Atelier we will share our experiences about organizing I living labs with students using design thinking methods and we will discuss the challenges and the outcomes of these 18 living labs organized in November 2021 and March 2022. We will also reflect on the experiences of the students and present some scenarios how this could be integrated in the institution.

Designing out waste and pollution, how to use AI to simplify social innovations (e.g. Food Security for all) or an inclusive society are only small parts of the systemic change that is needed. For the students the I living labs are an introduction to global challenges and design thinking. In the workshop participants will discuss on further developments and opportunities to develop students' transformative learning. Inspire each other on future trends and opportunities.

<https://eudres.eu/>

