

Engaged Learning

Engaged Learning is a pedagogical approach that enables students of higher education institutions to derive learning from meaningful community engagement whilst working on real world problems.

This summary is part of the Engaged Learning Toolkit, a website that is one of the outcomes of the Communities and Students Together project (2019-22) of six European universities, funded with the support of the European Union's ERASMUS+ Programme. Consisting of a number of helpful articles, infographs and case studies in English, the toolkit aims to serve anyone who is pursuing engaged learning initiatives in their higher education institution, involved in an initiative as a student or as a partner, or seeking more information about engaged learning in general.

What is Engaged Learning?

Engaged Learning is the process where students apply the theory learned at Higher Education Institutions to a context outside of universities by addressing societal concerns, challenges or needs while producing knowledge in an equitable, mutually beneficial partnership.

Engaged learning initiatives vary in structure and approach, sit within a diverse range of academic disciplines, and tackle an array of societal challenges.

Benefits of Engaged Learning

Reciprocity is a fundamental feature of all Engaged Learning initiatives.

Students gain an enriched education which provides them with new competencies and prepares them for their future career, while increasing their sense of civic responsibility. Many initiatives also enable students to produce an impactful dissertation or thesis that provides useful knowledge or evidence to the community or partner with whom they engage.

Communities that partner in Engaged Learning projects benefit from the skills and knowledge of a supervised student, and gain an opportunity to educate the next generation of professionals and citizens. Partners also receive tangible benefits from the contribution of a supervised student to their cause, research question or societal challenge. Furthermore, they benefit from access to resources through connection to the university, including specialised knowledge, trained researchers, and funding opportunities.

When it comes to **professionals at universities**, Engaged Learning demands what is also demanded of students – learn, develop, look beyond the boundaries of your discipline, and use what you have learned to contribute to the welfare of society.

Academic staff benefit from enhanced teaching and increased learning opportunities, and enriched teaching practice through the use of more pedagogical tools as well as enhanced knowledge of communities and more impactful research. They can use their community engagement practice in their teaching towards their career progression.

More information in English:

engagedlearningtoolkit.net
cast-euproject.eu