

Interviewing Seamus Hoyne from TUS, one of our Femxa's strategic partner in European Projects.

Seamus, for the Spanish audience of Femxa: What is TUS? what are their goals?

TUS is the Technological University of the Shannon. It is a new University (formed in October 2021) following the merger of Limerick Institute of Technology and Athlone Institute of Technology. The University has a total student population of 16,000 students with over 3,000 staff. We are proud of delivering high quality applied learning to our students and leading applied research dedicated to solving real world problems. We are leaders of the European Regional University Network (RUN-EU) with partners in Portugal, Austria, Hungary, Netherlands and Finland.



What projects are Femxa and TUS currently collaborating on? What phase are they in?

We are collaborating on the following:

NEF+

Almost finishing, a project about Outdoor learning, continuing with the FOLM project.

PI VET

We are in the process of creating the platform for teachers' canvases and their public ranking to be able to vote for the best, it will be a phenomenon to be able to vote for the best project in various areas (digital, environment, etc...).

ALIVE

We are developing a 3D virtual environment for media literacy for seniors -adults over 45- and we are finalizing our framework, to start soon with the technical part.

GREENHIVE

At Green Hive, our goal is to improve students' preparedness for the ecological transition through a sustainability education ecosystem called "Green Hive". As a first step in this exciting project, we are conducting research in participating countries. The aim is to better understand how sustainability competences are being incorporated into curricula and training practices in Vocational Education and Training (VET).

Collaboration between associated institutions and entities is essential. How is this cooperation carried out?

Collaboration occurs through many avenues and approaches. Project meetings enable partners to gain a deeper knowledge of each others' competencies, experience and capacity. Relationships are developed through various collaboration tools (on-line meetings, digital tools, teams working on specific tasks/deliverables etc...).

Open and transparent collaboration is important and fostering innovative approaches to problems is vital.

What impact do the European projects you work on produce? What challenges do you intend to achieve or solve?

TUS, and in particular the Development Unit in which the majority of our collaborations with FEMXA are situated, are focused on applied R&D which responds to and seeks to address real world problems in communities, enterprises, industry and public sectors. Our direct impacts are measured through.

- New opportunities for lifelong learning delivered to those who may not be able to access such opportunities.
- Innovative new approaches to societal problems through the application of technology, social models and engagement tools.
- Supporting educators at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) to deliver high quality learning experiences to their learners.

How is innovation transforming the educational reality and its future?

Innovation approaches are continuing to evolve in the education sector. Through the development and application of technologies and tools for blended/on-line learning, application of VR, AR, XR tools to develop immersive opportunities for learners, application of outdoor learning principles (where appropriate), data analytics and AI tools to maximise and evaluate student engagement. Micro-credentials and micro learning approaches are also emerging as a key tool in the education sector.

How can society benefit from these initiatives? Or how does society benefit from these initiatives?

The EU has set ambitious targets for lifelong learning. Young and old need to be supported on their LLL journey and be able to access education in new and innovative ways. This can support societal adoption and response to local/regional and international challenges as well as support people to maximise their impact on society from an economic, environment and societal perspective.