

# Breaking borders: A journey into Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)

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# Breaking borders: A journey into Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)

1. Introduction
2. Understanding COIL
3. Strategies for successful COIL implementation
4. Benefits and Challenges of COIL
5. COIL testimonial
6. Where and How to start?
7. Call: Seed Fund Call For Teachers 2025
8. Partner collaboration
9. Contact Details of Local Mobility Officers

## INTRODUCTION

### Context

As challenges and opportunities for the future Internationalization in higher education is entering a new phase, we need a shift from internationalization abroad.

Moving from a strong focus on a small elite of mobile students and faculty administrators, programs toward **internationalization at home for all members of the academic community has become more urgent than ever.**

**Internationalization at home is a set of different activities designed to develop intercultural and international competencies without any physical mobility.**

**Virtual exchanges are one of I@H activities and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is one form of Virtual exchanges that can be implemented within a I@H strategy.**

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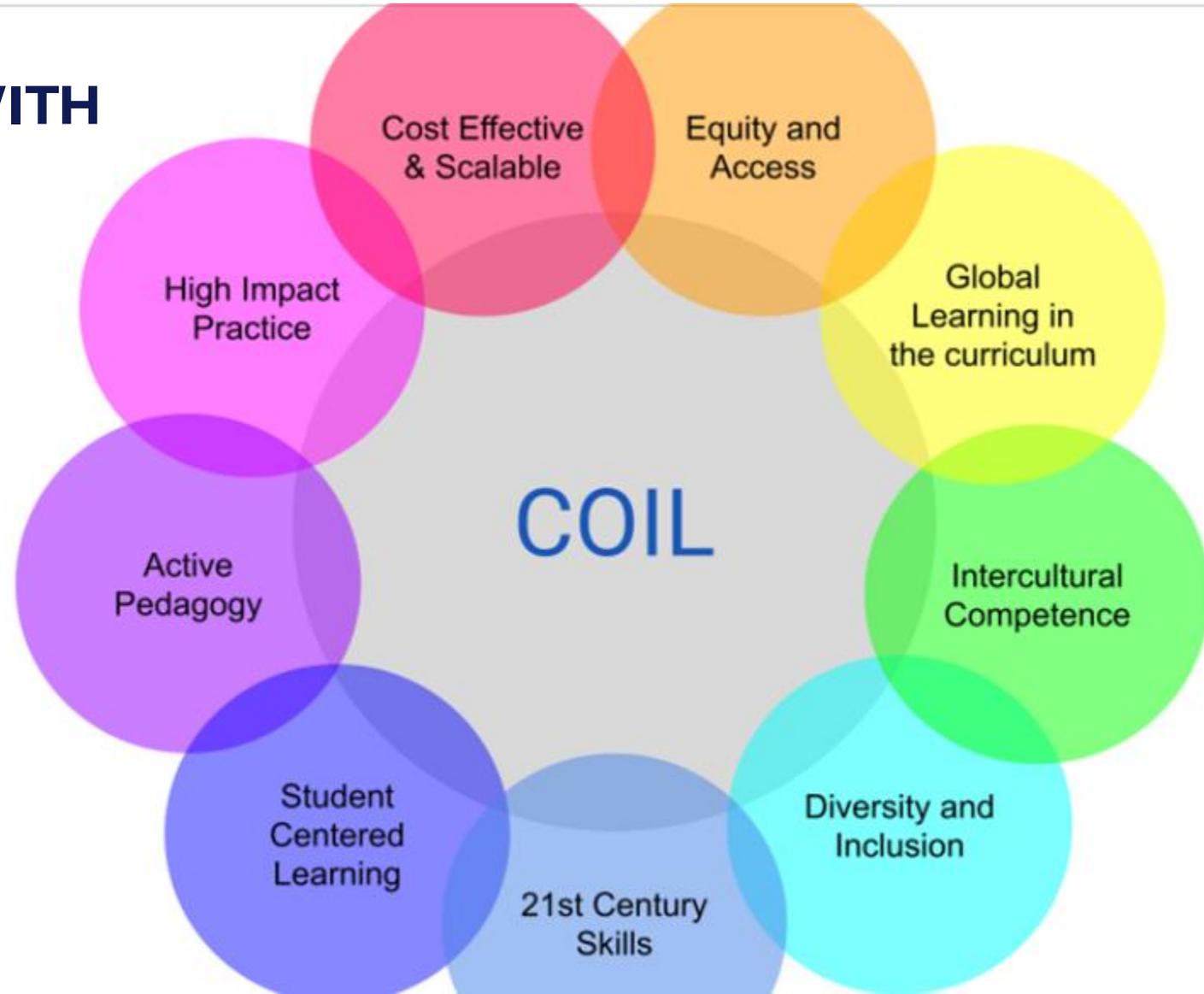
O'Dowd, R. (2018). From telecollaboration to virtual exchange: state-of-the-art and the role of UNICollaboration in moving forward.

Journal of Virtual Exchange, 1, 1-23.  
Research-publishing.net.  
<https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2018.jve.1>

## An overview of terminology used to refer to virtual exchange initiatives



## COIL ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES



Source: SUNY COIL

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Webinar's objectives**

**INFORM PARTICIPANTS ABOUT  
WHAT A COIL IS**

**EXPLAIN HOW IS A COIL  
STRUCTURED**

**GIVE TIPS ON HOW TO IMPLEMENT A  
COIL EFFICIENTLY**

**SHARE IDEAS ON HOW TO START A  
COIL**

## **UNDERSTANDING COIL**

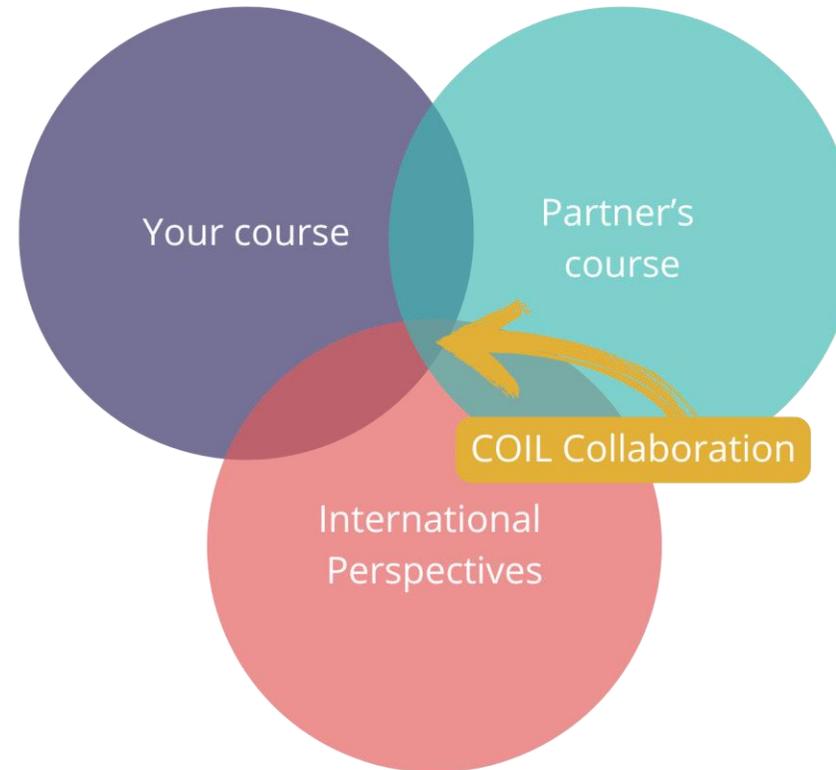
**COIL .....**

**Is NOT a new course**

**IS a new way/methodology to deliver your existing course**

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## FINDING THE RIGHT OVERLAP



Source: COILFramework © 2025 Ulysseus Dissemination Office

## UNDERSTANDING COIL

### COIL is .....

**an innovative method of teaching and learning, leveraging online technologies to deliver global learning and cross-cultural experiences in the classroom**

**an innovative pedagogy that involves collaborative teaching and learning between two or more countries in which work is facilitated by online communication. This collaboration happens in any format course that teachers lead.**

**an academic content lesson, as well as cross-cultural communication and collaboration, for both students and teachers. It can be developed in a couple of lessons or in an entire course.**

## UNDERSTANDING COIL

### COIL's principles

**COIL collaboration should be equitable and inclusive**

**COIL goal is to give students meaningful learning opportunities to connect with each other through share readings, activities, and discussions**

**Be sure to inform your students about the purpose and requirements of COIL activities, including how COIL helps facilitate the course's learning objectives**

**Incorporate a reflection activity to help students evaluate what they have learned by working with one another.**

Source: Adapted from "Connecting Carolina Classrooms with the World, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) A guide for instructors".

## UNDERSTANDING COIL

### COIL's basic components

**COIL can be created in any discipline;  
Interdisciplinary collaborations work well**

**Encourage active student learning and  
teamwork**

**Are a graded activity in each  
participating class**

**Are usually mostly asynchronous with  
some synchronous activities**

**Include an emphasis on cross-cultural  
interactions and understanding**

**Can use any technology tools that serve  
the learning goals**

Source: Adapted from "Connecting Carolina Classrooms with the World, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) A guide for instructors".

## STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL COIL IMPLEMENTATION

**Stretch your creativity for COIL activities**

**Technology used should be accessible to all students**

**Technology used should support the shared learning objectives**

**Plan time for ice breaker activities to help students from the two institutions get to know each other**

**COIL course will evolve**

**COIL activities should advance the course learning objectives**

Source: Adapted from "Connecting Carolina Classrooms with the World, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) A guide for instructors".

## STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL COIL IMPLEMENTATION

Collaborative Online International Learning can be successful between classes in the same or related disciplines as well as classes across disciplines.

In fact, interdisciplinary pairings often result in some of the most creative and engaging collaborations.

One of the great opportunities of a COIL is to infuse the courses with interactive, intercultural activities.

Source: SUNY COIL

## BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COIL

With COIL implementation you will foster:

**SKILLS**

**BEHAVIOURS**

**ATTITUDES**

**KNOWLEDGE**

Source: Adapted from "Connecting Carolina Classrooms with the World, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) A guide for instructors".

## BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COIL

### COIL's challenges:

**TIME**

**LANGUAGE**

**CULTURE**

**CONTENT**

**ASSESSMENT**

**TECHNOLOGY**

**INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE  
AND EXPECTATIONS**

**SUPPORT**

Source: SUNY COIL

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## COIL Testimonial

Violeta Salonen

Senior Lecturer in Experience Design and Management, Haaga-Helia UAS

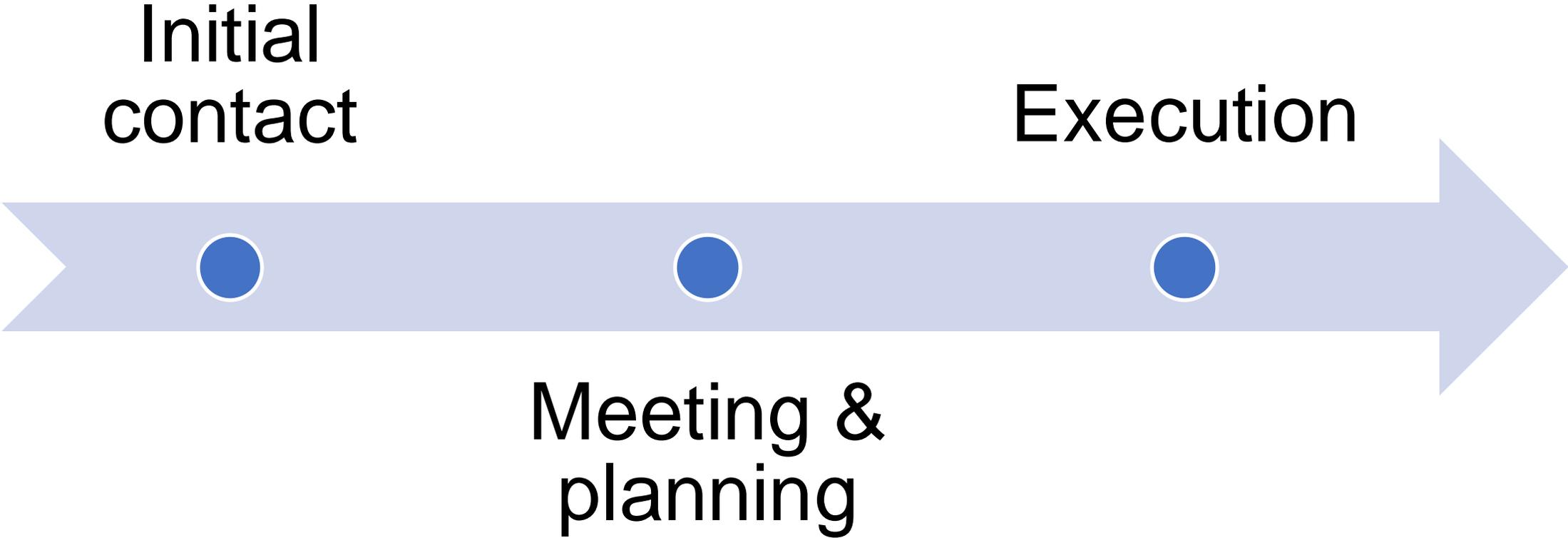


# COLL example

Violeta Salonen



# Timeline about 9 months



# Initial contact

- Checking the course suitability
  - UCG: Tourist Guiding and Animation in Tourism (dr Sanja Peković)
  - HH: Creative Hospitality & Tourism
- Easy communication
- Emails + online meeting



Figure 1 COIL Graph (source: Ulyseus Dissemination Office)

# In person meeting & planning



Checking course content



Defining learning goals (monitoring & grading)



Searching for project



Planning info session for students



Making groups



Other admin things (Emails, Zoom etc.)

# Execution

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1<sup>st</sup> session took place beginning of March '25

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Each lecturer had sessions before with own group & explained the process & project

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Clear deadlines communication

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Commissioner's presentation

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Making & connecting groups & (a must) ice breaker

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Reflecting on academic content and intercultural exchange

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Challenges: groups finding time to meet, skills in problem solving and decision making (offer support)

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Feedback (so far): exciting, different, nice to know what people do in other Universities

# Follow up

Weekly follow up with groups needed

Important: project pit-stop (with & without commissioner)

Joint online sessions – helps with strengthening the groups

Q&A – leave longer time than usual

Joint grading

# Next steps



Once the course is over reflecting on the process



Planning next COIL 😊



**Thanks!**

Questions?

## WHERE AND HOW TO START?

### Questions you can ask yourself

Is my course a good “candidate “ for a COIL experience?

Am I ready to teach my course in a technologically enhanced way?

Do I have the support of my institution?

Do I already have a partner? If no, what are some of key criteria for partner selection?

Source: Adapted from “Faculty Guide for Collaborative Online International Learning - course development” SUNY COIL CENTER.

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## RESOURCES



[Ulysseus COIL Handbook:  
Practical Guide for Educators](#)



[Introduction to COIL](#)



[Perspectives on COIL](#)



[Student Guide on COIL](#)

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## Seed Fund Call For Teachers 2025

Bianca van Putten  
Ulysseus Mobility Coordinator

# Call: Seed Fund Call For Teachers 2025



## Exciting Opportunity for Educators!

- This seed fund financially supports academics in co-creating a COIL by enabling teachers to meet in person for joint design and planning of the course.
- The seed fund covers max. 2500 € (travel, accommodation, other eligible costs).
- The COILs awarded must be implemented by 30 June 2026.
- Seed funding projects must involve at least two lecturers from two Ulysseus partner universities.
- Application deadline: 20 May 2025



**Find out more!**

# Partner Collaboration

Seeking a partner? We highly encourage you to connect via:



[Ulysseus Experts Database](#)



[Ulysseus Curriculums Search Engine](#)



[Ulysseus COIL Matchmaking hub on Padlet](#)



[Ulysseus LinkedIn page](#)

# Local Mobility Officers

Questions?  
Contact your Local Mobility Officer!



[Contact Details Local Mobility Officers](#)



Source: Ulysseus Mobility Team © 2025 Haaga-Helia

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# Thank you

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