

**Proposal International Classroom project from the
Faculty Board of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences**

Deadline 1 May 2016

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General information	
Project title	Pilot Platform International Classroom: Innovation, Synergy, and Sustainability (ISS)
Intended start date	May 1, 2016
Intended period (1-2 years)	1 year
Budget requested (max. € 100.000 per faculty/50% faculty match)	63.050 euro
Faculty contact person	
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Project plan	
<p>Summary (max. 150 words): <i>Short description of the faculty's approach, objectives and targeted results.</i></p> <p>The Faculty BSS (Faculty) aims at an integration of the International Classroom (IC) in all its education programmes and tracks. In this first pilot, three new master tracks will systematically incorporate aspects of the IC as described in the IC document of the University of Groningen. These aspects include the creation of an international community of students and teachers, the professionalization of teaching staff (intercultural competences and skills), and the integration of the IC in the curriculum (content, assessment, evaluation). The IC will be combined with innovative teaching and learning methods across the three tracks. This pilot will adopt systematic assessment and regular evaluation meetings for staff members, which will facilitate exchange and dissemination of ideas and experiences, and will feed into an IC vision both on programme level and on faculty level. In this way, the Pilot IC will aim for synergy and sustainability.</p>	
<p>The Why</p> <p>The University of Groningen aims to become a truly international university with students and staff from diverse backgrounds cooperating in the development of international perspectives on societal matters. The Faculty supports this vision and some programmes already attract large numbers of international students. The Faculty aims to utilize the potential of diversity and support students and staff in working in diverse international contexts.</p> <p>The internalisation vision of the Faculty includes constructive utilization of (cultural) diversity in the classroom; the Pilot IC – of which this is a first of three proposals - will provide a basis for achieving this. This pilot aims at developing good practices that will inspire and inform other tracks and programmes within the Faculty.</p> <p>The Faculty has selected three new master tracks for the Pilot IC: <i>Youth⁰⁻²¹, Society and Policy (Pedagogical Sciences); Environmental Psychology (Psychology); and Social Networks in a Sustainable Society (Sociology)</i>. These tracks will jointly and cooperatively develop, apply, and test innovative methods to utilize diversity and facilitate teaching and learning in diverse contexts. Notably, all three tracks address global societal and environmental issues that necessarily require an international approach. As such, this joint pilot project offers an ideal platform for integrating, testing, and evaluating the different aspects of IC. It creates the unique opportunity to develop an integrated internationalisation vision at the Faculty, which transcends and unites the different programmes. This interdisciplinary context adds to diversity and is therefore an important aspect of this pilot project.</p>	

In order to achieve sustainability, this pilot has three focus points for the international classroom: 1. preparing / enabling students to learn in an international classroom; 2. preparing / enabling teachers to teach in an international classroom; 3. integrating the international classroom into the curriculum. Together, these components will facilitate utilization of diversity in class and will support teaching and learning from an international perspective.

The results and lessons learnt from the Pilot Platform International Classroom will inform future international classroom activities across a wide spectrum of programmes at the Faculty, thus ensuring sustainability of this project. In this way, a professional learning community is established within the Faculty; research has indicated that such professional learning communities hold “.... considerable promise for capacity building for sustainable improvement.” (Stoll et al, 2006, p. 221; cited in Timmerman 2013).

Approach

In this pilot, the Faculty’s vision on internationalisation, as described in the IC framework, is aligned with three central components for developing an IC in each of the three master tracks. This approach will enable to develop, apply and evaluate IC practices and learning outcomes in different contexts, thereby improving the generalization of the outcomes and contributing to an integrated Faculty vision.

Vision on internationalisation:

The Faculty aims at offering (master) programmes that provide rigorous academic training and up-to-date professional skills, thus enabling students to become leaders in a globalized world. The IC-project is understood as a means to add an international dimension to the curriculum, both regarding the students and staff involved, and regarding the curriculum.

The focus of the pilot is threefold:

1. preparing / enabling students to learn in an international classroom;
2. preparing / enabling teachers to teach in an international classroom;
3. integrating the international classroom into the curriculum.

These three focus points are closely connected to the IC conceptual framework on teaching and learning (International Classroom Project 2013-2020), in particular “involving students from diverse backgrounds” (nr.1, above); “working effectively with student and staff diversity through purposeful interaction” (nr. 2 and 3, above); “including the overall learning environment” (nr. 1, 2 and 3, above); “offering appropriate support for staff and students...” (nr. 1, 2 and 3, above). Together, these focus points are aligned towards the first principle of the IC conceptual framework, namely “working from a vision on internationalisation”.

Regarding the curriculum, three aspects will be addressed (International Classroom Project 2013-2020):

- the formal curriculum: content, assessment, outcomes (i.e. planned and communicated activities);
- the informal curriculum: non-compulsory learning activities (e.g. extracurricular activities, excursions);
- the hidden curriculum: (culturally specific) socialisation, cultural capital, knowing appropriate ways of acting, behaving and responding in different situations with different people.

In this pilot, these curricular perspectives together with the threefold-focus of the pilot are integrated in a systematic approach to internationalisation (see below). The systematic approach is general and applies to all three participating master tracks, at the same time allowing each track to set its own priorities and select the strategies for internationalisation that best fit a specific track. In this way, the pilot will have a higher chance of success. At the same time, the tracks will work closely together in achieving an integrated vision for internationalisation that is faculty-wide and informs a wide spectrum of master tracks, and other educational activities within the Faculty.

	Student	Teacher	Content
Formal curriculum	Schedule of classes, syllabus; literature; exams	Teaching tools and materials; lectures, seminars, assignments; ways of giving feedback to students; learning outcomes	Course description, literature; developing practical and academic skills

Informal curriculum	Student (international) activities	Staff (international) activities	
Hidden curriculum	Previous experiences; expectations of being a student (e.g. behaviour towards teachers; ways of studying; knowing what kind of knowledge is required at exams); feeling included or excluded	Expectations about student behaviour, academic attitude and learning styles; communication styles; evaluation and grading system	Compulsory literature; what and how a student is expected to study and to learn.

Being aware of the transition that international students are making from their former educational experiences to a new educational context is widely recognised as an important first step in developing a truly international and inclusive classroom (e.g. Caroll, 2015; Deardorff 2006; Leask & Bridge 2013; International Education Association of Australia, 2013). Here, the perspectives of ‘the student as learner’ and the ‘hidden curriculum’ interconnect. Similarly, the perspectives on the teaching staff and the formal curriculum intersect when didactical choices are aligned with learning content and desired learning outcomes (e.g. Romein, 2010; Caroll, 2015).

For this pilot, we propose four steps addressing the three focus points mentioned above, as well as the synergy and sustainability of the IC-project:

1. preparing / training of teaching staff by offering workshops, organised by the department for Educational Support and Innovation (ESI) and the Language Centre (LC) of the University of Groningen:

- a. workshop “intercultural competences” (LC)
- b. workshops on the international classroom (ESI), chosen according to the needs of each track:
 - international learning outcomes;
 - engaging intercultural teaching and learning activities;
 - assessment in an international setting.

2. integrating IC into the formal curriculum:

- a. identify the desired internationalisation goals for each participating course
- b. align these goals with the content and didactics of the course (i.e. adapting and / or redesigning courses)
- c. communicate these goals, didactics, and ways of assessment and feedback to the students

3. creating an inclusive community:

- a. organising internationalisation events for students and staff
- b. facilitating international atmosphere in the classroom and among students and staff
- b. focusing on the students as active learners, by organising Learning Communities as ‘atelier’ for students to work together on assignments
- c. making use of (cultural) diversity and students’ previous (work)experiences in addressing specific topics in the courses

4. systematic evaluation of IC:

- a. assess experiences by students and staff: after introduction week, and after first and second block of the first semester;
- b. *intevision* meetings with participating staff in the pilot: good practices, examples, challenges

The experience, expertise and good practices of this first IC pilot will be used to inform and inspire the tracks or programmes that will apply for the next two rounds of applications for the IC-project in the Faculty, finally resulting in:

- embedding IC principles in each (international) course, track and programme;
- incorporating IC learning outcomes in the final qualifications of each programme.

Below, more detailed descriptions of how each participating track will develop IC are given.

Track Environmental Psychology:

An international and intercultural perspective is crucial for understanding global environmental and energy problems and, particularly, the human dimension of these problems. Internationalisation is one of the key goals in the new master track Environmental Psychology. This track is unique in Europe and has a high potential to attract international students; some current staff members come from other countries (e.g. Lithuania, Turkey), too. The track will integrate internationalisation in course curricula and apply innovative learning and teaching methods that help manage and utilize (cultural) diversity among students and staff. The Pilot Platform International Classroom will facilitate realisation of these goals. The IC aspects will be integrated in all courses of the master track Environmental Psychology, including the two new courses that are being developed, namely *Advanced Topics in Environmental Psychology* and *Working in Interdisciplinary Teams*. For example, the courses will integrate such topics as *Cross-cultural differences in environmental perceptions, attitudes and behaviour* and *How to address environmental and energy problems in global international and interdisciplinary contexts?* Innovative teaching methods will be applied in the master track Environmental Psychology, for example presenting and discussing lecture materials in small groups and peer reviews. In the Pilot Platform International Classroom, these new methods will be developed with an eye for internationalisation. For example, cultural differences may exist in how students communicate and expect to give and receive feedback. Staff will be trained how to take these considerations into account in their teaching and provide feedback on possible different interpretations across cultures. All staff members of the master track Environmental Psychology will actively participate in the Pilot Platform International Classroom, thereby ensuring that IC expertise and an IC learning community are built on the programme level. Staff members will work closely together and share their experiences; moreover, they will evaluate IC together with the other two participating master tracks. The internationalisation vision and strategies will be applied in the master track Environmental Psychology, including continuous revision and improvement. This will be facilitated by the fact that *all* staff members will develop knowledge and expertise regarding the IC. The lessons learnt will feed into internationalisation vision and strategies on a faculty level and will inform a wide spectrum of other programmes and tracks in the Faculty.

Track Social Networks in a Sustainable Society (SNSS):

The newly established master track SNSS teaches and applies state-of-the-art theories and methods to enable students to better understand how the content, structure and dynamics of social networks affect society across a wide range of domains. The areas addressed reflect the staff's main areas of research expertise: collaboration in the care sector, joint production in firms, integration of ethnic minorities, transition to renewable sources of energy, bullying among adolescents, and healthy ageing. Students learn to apply theories relating to institutions and human behavior to social networks, using cutting-edge tools and methods to gather and analyze quantitative and qualitative network data. This knowledge is applied to analyze and improve policies and interventions.

We devised four activities directed towards a sustainable implementation of an IC in the SNSS programme. First, we will invest substantially into the training of the seven teachers of the track in order to create awareness of the opportunities and challenges of an IC and to provide them with the didactical tools to teach diverse classes. Secondly, we will adjust the curriculum of the SNSS programme in order to implement the IC perspective. Every course of the programme will contain at least one session that links the subject matter to the challenge of integration in culturally diverse groups. Also, the IC methods that our teachers acquired during the training will be applied in the courses. Thirdly, we will invest into student activities, for instance during introduction week, in order to create intercultural awareness amongst our students and to facilitate interaction amongst students with diverse backgrounds. Finally, the IC project is a unique opportunity to expand our relationships with internationally active third-aid organizations (e.g. Médecins Sans Frontières) to our teaching activities. Our aim is to set up long-term structural relationships with at least one organization, which would allow our future students to apply for internship scholarships from the Erasmus+ programme or the Marco Polo Fund. In order to create these internship opportunities at internationally active third-aid organizations, we will invite at least one expert from an organization to present in our courses on policy design, and to report about the challenges of working in ethnically diverse settings and how

organizations have learned to tackle related problems. We will also support research visits at the organizations for students aiming to focus their master theses on topics related to third-aid organizations and their international activities. This will serve as start-up financing for a long-term cooperation and will provide internship opportunities also for future students.

Track Youth⁰⁻²¹, Society & Policy (YSP)

The newly developed international track YSP addresses meso-level questions related to youth, youth care and education while integrating research, policy and practice. This means that issues relating to the wellbeing of children and youth, such as child abuse and protection, participation, and migration, will be studied as internationally urgent themes, requiring an international approach. In doing so, this innovative track within the Master's programme Pedagogical Sciences offers students from different countries and with diverse backgrounds the opportunity to link, combine, and compare practices, policies and experiences. The YSP track integrates international perspectives in the courses in order to equip students with academic, professional and intercultural skills necessary to function in contemporary municipalities, youth care and educational organisations. Furthermore, it is possible for students to do their internships abroad, thus strengthening the international competences of Dutch students and allowing international students to apply their newly gained academic knowledge and skills in their home country. In this way, the track has a different focus compared to other Master's programmes in (Special Needs) Pedagogy that lead towards clinical practices of child and youth care. The Pilot Platform International Classroom, with the four steps mentioned above, enables the integration of IC aspects from the start of this track in 2016-2017 (in particular: creating an inclusive community; preparing teachers to rethink, re-orient and reorganise their teaching; evaluating and sharing knowledge and experience). The track has six compulsory courses, four of which will play a part in the pilot. In these four courses, IC aspects of the curriculum will be combined with good practices that the Department of Pedagogical Sciences has developed in relation to Learning Communities. In this way, students in the YSP master track will profit from an innovative and stimulating learning environment, in which co-constructive learning and formative assessment are important ingredients. Three staff members will play an active role in the pilot as 'pioneers'; their experiences will be shared with colleagues in monthly staff meetings, as well as with colleagues from the other participating programmes in the pilot.

Literature:

- Caroll, J. (2015). *Tools for teaching in an internationally mobile world*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge.
- Deardorff, D.K. (2006). Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10 (3), 241-266. DOI: 10.1177/1028315306287002
- International Classroom Project 2013-2020*, University of Groningen
- International Education Association of Australia (2013). Good practice principles in practice: teaching across cultures. (<http://www.ieaa.org.au/documents/item/125>)
- Leask, B. & Bridge (2013). Comparing internationalisation of the curriculum in action across disciplines: theoretical and practical perspectives. *Compare: A journal of comparative and international education*, 43 (1) 79-101. DOI:10.1080/03057925.2013.746566
- Romein, D. (2010). *Examples of international teaching situations. The importance and application of targeted activities*. University of Groningen: University Centre for Learning and Teaching (internal memo)
- Timmerman, G. (2013). *Onderwijsinnovatie bij Pedagogische Wetenschappen (Pedok) 2012-2015. Naar Academic Learning Communities*. University of Groningen, Faculty BSS (internal report)

Project organization

In this pilot, three new master tracks will participate:

Environmental Psychology (IC coordinator: dr. G. Perlaviciute),

Social Networks in a Sustainable Society (IC coordinator: dr. M. Maes) Youth⁰⁻²¹, Society and Policy

(IC coordinator: dr. P.R. Schreuder)

Roles & responsibilities:

The coordinators of the three tracks will be responsible for managing and coordinating the Pilot

Platform International Classroom. Assisting staff (e.g. student assistants) may be assigned to facilitate the coordination of project activities (e.g. organising meetings); the involvement of assisting staff may vary across the different stages of the project.

To ensure internationalisation on a programme level, all teaching staff of the three master tracks will participate in the Pilot Platform International Classroom by means of attending training and workshops, integrating IC components in the course curricula, and sharing expertise and lessons learnt (e.g. *intervision* groups, evaluation meetings).

Staff members participating in the Pilot Platform International classroom per master track:

Environmental Psychology:

prof. dr. Linda Steg
dr. Goda Perlaviciute (IC coordinator)
dr. Thijs Bouman
dr. Lise Jans
dr. Kees Keizer
dr. Ellen van der Werff

Social Networks in a Sustainable Society:

prof. dr. Rafael Wittek
dr. Francesca Giardini (programme coordinator)
dr. Michael Maes (IC coordinator)
dr. Arie Glebbeek
dr. Menno Rol
dr. Rita Smaniotto
dr. Christian Steglich
dr. Rudi Wielers

Youth⁰⁻²¹, Society & Policy:

prof. dr. Greetje Timmerman
prof. dr. Alexander Minnaert
dr. Pauline Schreuder (IC coordinator)
prof. dr. Hans Grietens
dr. Tina Kretschmer
dr. Monica López López

Communication:

The three master tracks will have regular meetings in order to ensure that expertise and lessons learnt are effectively communicated and exchanged. The experience across the three master tracks will be integrated in an overall report on the Pilot Platform International Classroom. The results of the project will be disseminated on a faculty level in presentations and on the Faculty website; the report will be shared with all programmes of the Faculty GMW.

- Faculty-newsletter on IC
- Google+ Community

Evaluation:

- adaptation of the standard course evaluation form (i.e. including IC issues)
- evaluation report 1: students (introduction week; courses in semester 1A; courses in semester 1B)
- evaluation report 2: teaching staff (introduction week; experiences with international students in and outside the classroom; experiences with assessment and feedback)

Research towards sustainability:

Assessment of the project will adopt a scientific approach in order to generate evidence-informed insights into the effectiveness and outcomes of diverse components of IC. Preliminary results will be used to inform the proposals for the next two rounds of the IC project call in the faculty. The results of the assessment will be integrated in the final report and will feed into a long-term

sustainable perspective on IC that transcends specific programmes and can be applied in the long run on a faculty level.

Workshops / training:

The Project Platform International Classroom will utilize the knowledge and expertise that are available in the faculty and the university. The workshops and trainings will be provided by:

- BSS staff members internationalisation (Language & Culture policy project)
- Language Centre (Language & Culture policy project)
- ESI (Educational Support and Innovation)

Timeline:

May – June / July 2016:

- workshop 'intercultural competences' for all teachers involved in the participating courses
- other workshops: planning tailored to LC, ESI and participating tracks
- formulate plan for introduction week, including workshop 'intercultural awareness' for students (by BSS staff member)
- adapting / redesigning the participating courses of the formal curriculum
- monthly meetings Pilot Platform IC-ISS

September – October 2016:

- introduction week
- start of the courses
- evaluation report on the IC aspects of the courses
- minor adjustments to courses in period 1B (if considered necessary)
- monthly meetings Pilot Platform IC-ISS

November 2016 – January 2017:

- meeting Faculty IC group: discussing first experiences and results, providing input for second and third rounds of the IC project call
- evaluation report on the IC (first semester)
- monthly meetings Pilot Platform IC-ISS

Spring 2017:

- BSS meeting for all staff involved or interested in IC: presenting the results of the pilot

Sustainability and dissemination

The three new master tracks together provide a test platform for IC at the Faculty. Therefore, good assessment and integration of lessons learnt are key for the projects in the second and third round of the IC project call, and for realising IC on a faculty level in the future. The three master tracks include internationalisation goals in their courses and will examine the extent to which these goals are achieved. The current project planning creates much room for assessment, for example by means of regular staff meetings, *interview* groups, formal and informal assessment. An academic approach will be taken to assessing IC, ideally by comparing the internationalising criteria (e.g. perceived atmosphere in the class, students' ability to take an international perspective to the course topics) before and after realising the IC. This will provide knowledge for further implementation and improvement of IC, e.g. in the second and third round of the IC project call. The three master tracks represent our three departments (except AOLB): Pedagogical Sciences, Psychology and Sociology, thereby providing a robust platform for testing sustainability of the IC in diverse contexts and enabling generalisation of the results. This will feed into the overall internationalisation strategy that can be applied to many different tracks and programmes within the Faculty.

If applicable (optional)

Synergy with International Classroom project and/or Learning Communities Project: **In text**

Finances			
	What?	Specifications	Costs
Workshops	Intensive training 'Intercultural competences' (all teaching staff)	Language Centre (Language & Culture Policy Project)	PM (see LCP project)
	Three courses on teacher professionalization (ESI); 4 hrs per course	6 teachers per track = 18 teachers costs: 150 euro per person per course 18*3*150 = 8100 euro	8.100 euro
	Compensation for hours spent on professionalization (12 hrs.)	12 * 18 staff members = 216 hrs 1 hour = approx. 50 euro	10.800euro
Social activities	Workshop 'intercultural competences' for students	BSS staff (LCP project)	PM (see LCP project)
	Other activities students + staff	per track: 1500 euro	4.500 euro
Adapting curriculum	Compensation for developing lectures, assignments and exams; aligning learning aims with didactical approach in syllabus; coordination of international contacts (guest lectures and research visits)	IC coordinators, teaching staff	30.000 euro <i>GMW-matching</i>
Intervision meetings	Six meetings with track colleagues	6*18*1 hrs = 108 hrs	5.400 euro
	Four meetings with Faculty IC group	3*4*2 hrs = 24 hrs	1.200 euro
Evaluation	Introduction week + 15 courses	40 hrs (student assistant, 20 euro per hour approx.)	800 euro <i>GMW-matching</i>
Dissemination	Report + organization of symposium	45 hrs (IC coordinators)	2.250 euro
Total:			63.050 euro