



Universitat
de les Illes Balears



iApS
2030

Innovation UNIT
in sustainable
development,
health and global justice
through service-learning

More than words: An Integrative Approach to Cooperation and Quality Assurance through service-learning.

Berta Paz Lourido

2024 European Quality Assurance Forum

Enhancing education, research and societal engagement through quality assurance

University of Twente, Netherlands

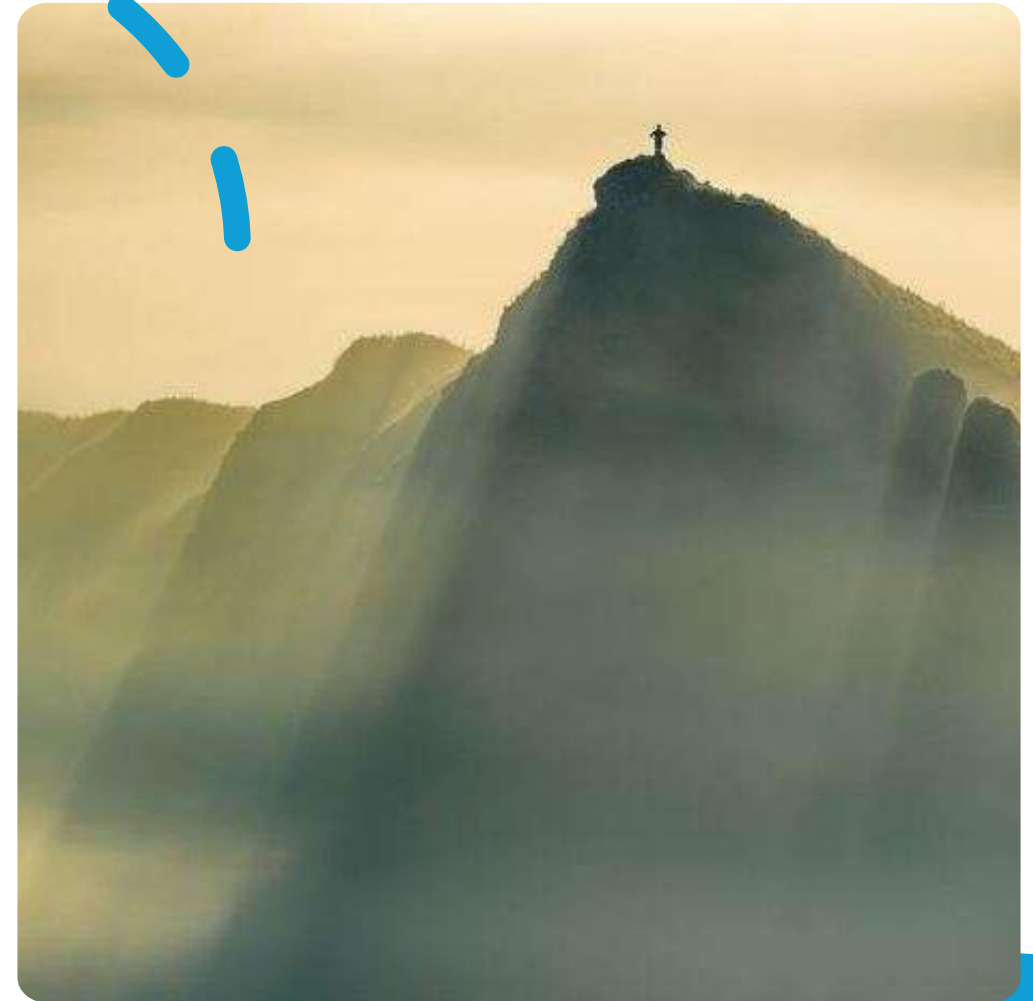
14-16 November 2024

Service-learning

Service-learning fosters well-rounded and impactful communitarian learning experiences for students while advancing teaching, research, and knowledge transfer embedded with civic values.

In its dimensions of experiential learning, service-learning initiatives encourage students to increase their awareness about societal and environmental challenges, including their responsibility towards society.

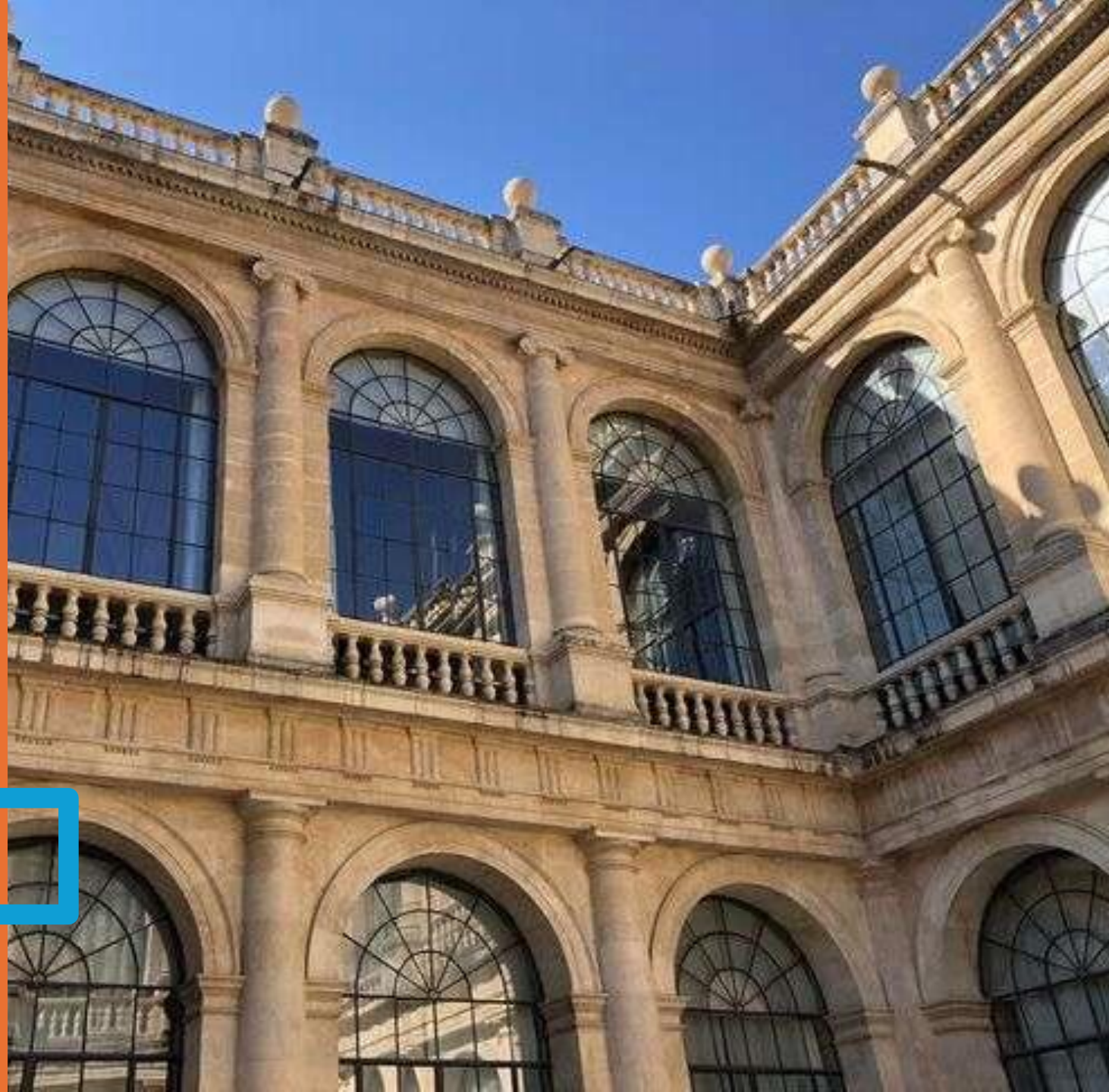
Service-Learning develops the capacity to understand complex problems, cultivate students' values, act, and bring democratic change for themselves and others.



Integrates
service
&
learning
with a social
dimension
purpose



Universities' role





Promoting service-learning is

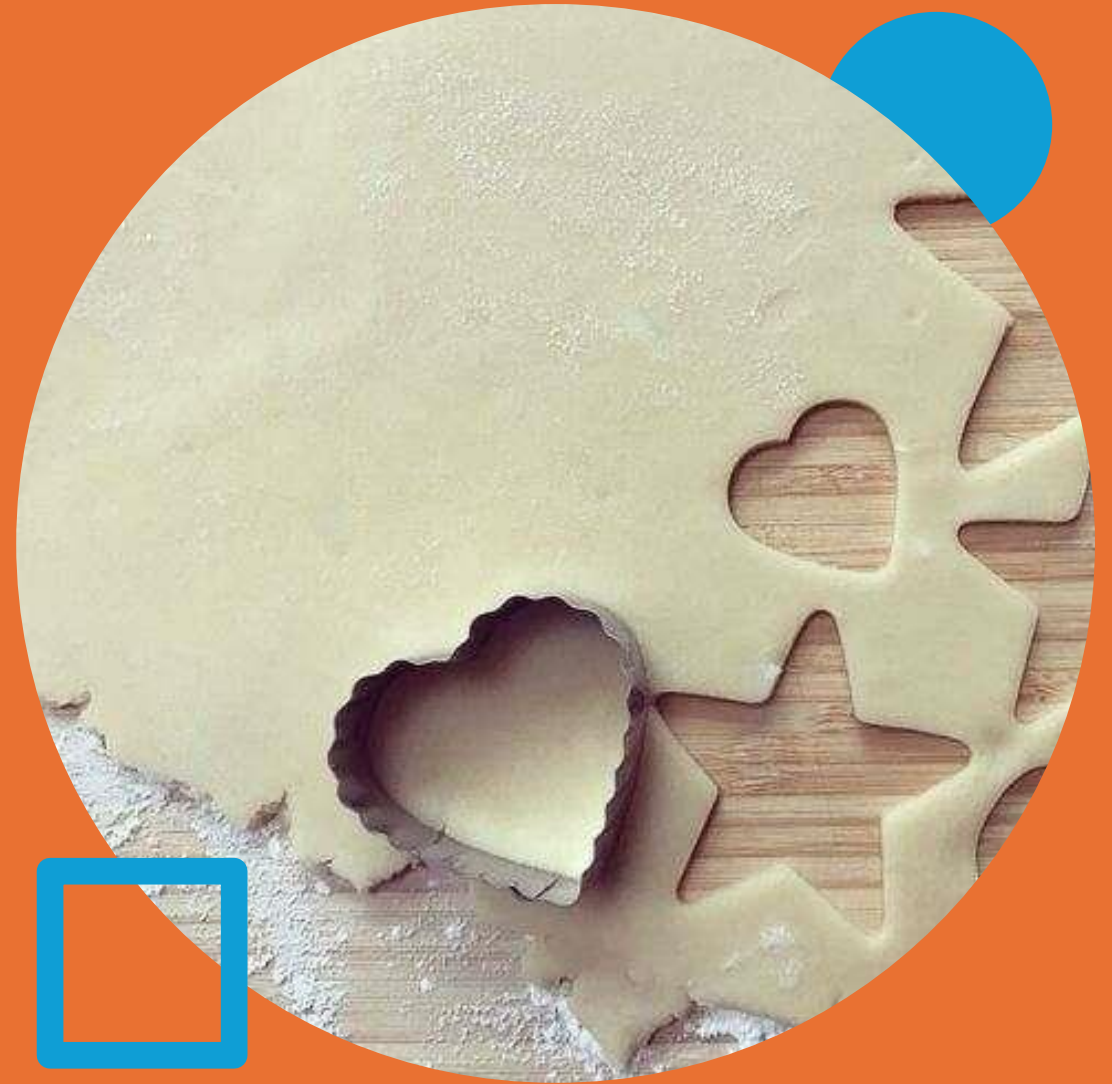
a way to strengthen the social dimension of the universities,

creating interactive relationships with community partners

based on reciprocity and mutual trust.



Universities' Third mission



Service-learning is recognized as an effective way of connecting students and academics with civil society organizations and the local community.

Service-learning benefits communities by establishing cooperation as a value within the local culture.



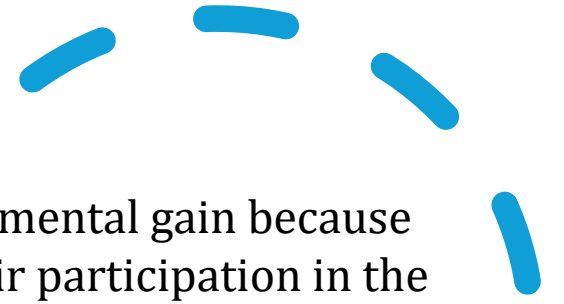
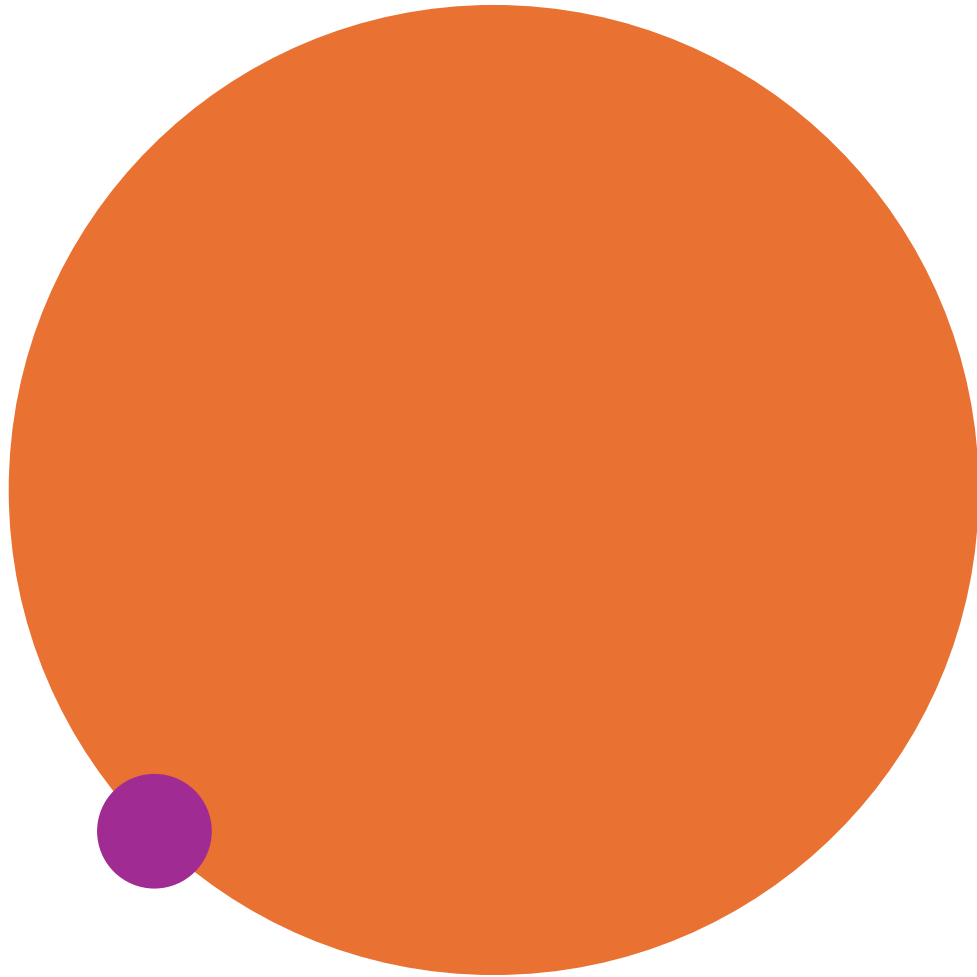


Cooperation



Social motivations





In service-learning, there is an instrumental gain because students receive ECTS credits for their participation in the co-designed projects, but the motivation is essentially social.

It has to do with attitudes, values, and identity, for example, linked to social inclusion, sustainability development, or the common good.

This type of cooperation determines the decision-making procedures, shared governance, and interpersonal trust.

The values that underline people's actions are then the beacon of cooperation.

A photograph of a grand building with large, fluted columns and a wide set of stone steps leading up to them. The steps are made of light-colored stone and are arranged in a wide, shallow staircase. The columns are also made of light-colored stone and have a fluted design. The overall scene is a classic architectural setting, likely a university or government building.

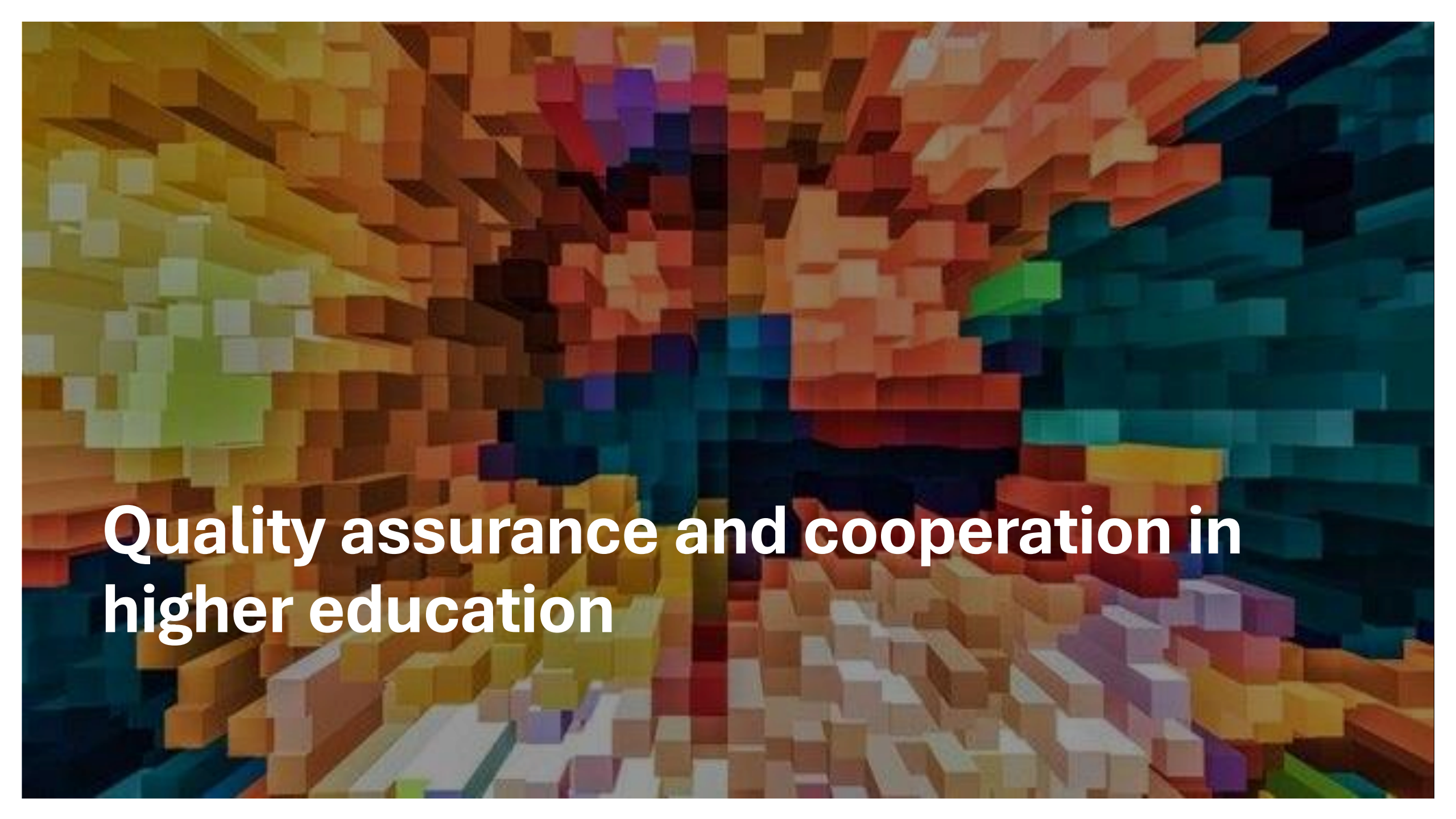
Quality in higher education



Multidimensional definitions of quality assurance are beneficial for achieving greater transparency and alignment with forms of cooperation with stakeholders.

Defining quality is an important prerequisite for quality assurance considerations in service-learning.





Quality assurance and cooperation in higher education



Quality in service-learning focuses on the development of transversal skills such as critical thinking, entrepreneurship, creativity and civic engagement.

Critical Reflection!







EUROPEAN SERVICE-LEARNING PUBLIC DECLARATION ON CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

JUNE, 2023



Guidelines for the Institutionalization of service-learning in European higher education

By Álvaro Ribeiro, Pilar Aramburuzabala, Berta Paz-Lourido

December 2021



POLICY BRIEF

January 2021

Executive Summary

Institutionalization of Service-Learning is a multifaceted process that integrates civic engagement values into higher education curriculum of an institution so that SL becomes part of the culture of the institution. It implies the inclusion of SL in the strategic plans of the institution, to provide resources needed to support the use of this methodology, including a SL office, staff, funding and space, training, faculty rewards, credit recognition for student participation, and a program evaluation.

This policy brief sets the concept of institutionalization of Service-Learning in European higher education and presents policy recommendations for the European Commission, European States, international stakeholders, and Higher Education Institutions.

EASLHE Definition of Service-Learning

Service-learning in higher education is an experiential educational method in which students engage in community service, reflect critically on this experience, and learn from it personally, socially and academically. The activities address human, social and environmental needs from the perspective of social justice and sustainable development, and aim at enriching learning in higher education, fostering civic responsibility and strengthening communities. Service-learning is always recognized with ECTS.

A European Framework for the Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education

Introduction

The European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education (EASLHE) ^[1] believes that Higher Education (HE) is a key tool to promote sustainable human development. In accordance with its commitment to sustainability in the search for environmental quality, social justice and a viable and equitable economy, EASLHE academic members consider that the generation of a culture that contributes to a comprehensive and environmentally sustainable development is an ethical imperative. For this, it is necessary to establish channels that facilitate the involvement of the entire academic community in the construction of a model of HE institutions that promote sustainability and social responsibility.

The inclusion of civic engagement in the teaching-learning processes must be done through methodologies that are consistent with the ethical, holistic, complex, global, transversal, and socially responsible principles.

Service-Learning (SL) is a powerful pedagogical tool that contributes to putting this mission into practice by improving learning, developing social responsibility, and strengthening the communities.

SL as an ideal teaching methodology for the development of civic engagement

From this perspective, Service-Learning is a valuable strategy for the inclusion of civic engagement in the curricula. Likewise, it responds to current HE regulations, which demand that HE favours practices of social and civic responsibility that combine academic learning in the different degrees with the provision of services to the community that are aimed at improving the quality of life and social inclusion.

Service-Learning can be used in all Undergraduate and Postgraduate degrees. Its integration in the curriculum can take different formats: integrated in the teaching syllabus, external internships, and final bachelor and master thesis. All teachers previously trained in this methodology can supervise a Service-Learning project, which must be linked to the content of the subjects they teach and to social organizations (associations, NGOs, foundations, public institutions, etc.).

Service-Learning methodology is consolidated in university education in other regions of the world, where not only projects are developed, but there are structures within and outside the institutions that support and promote these actions.

EASLHE proposes the institutionalization of Service-Learning in European Higher Education to promote civic engagement, contribute to the development of a fairer society and improve academic and social learning that favours the development of the students' competences.

The institutionalization of Service-Learning in European Higher Education requires customized **Institutional Declarations**, approved by the Governing Councils, or by Boards of University Networks, to support the implementation of Service-Learning projects.

GREEN PAPER ON POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON SERVICE-LEARNING IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION

FOR DEVELOPING HIGH QUALITY SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECTS



Real

Service-Learning is an experiential pedagogy where students learn by working with real needs of the community in order to transform them.



Reciprocity

As reciprocal process, Service-Learning projects require that all parties involved learn and benefit. A long-term commitment and the promotion of students' intercultural competences are relevant.



Responsibility

There is a responsibility for social change in Service-Learning. The project is rooted on social justice and dignity. Service is not assistentialism. The projects seek the roots of the social & environmental needs.



Relativism

Contextual relativism is crucial when designing a Service-Learning project. Not every project can be replicated in different communities. Service placements are chosen in collaboration with local hosts to co-create or to adapt the project.



Reflection

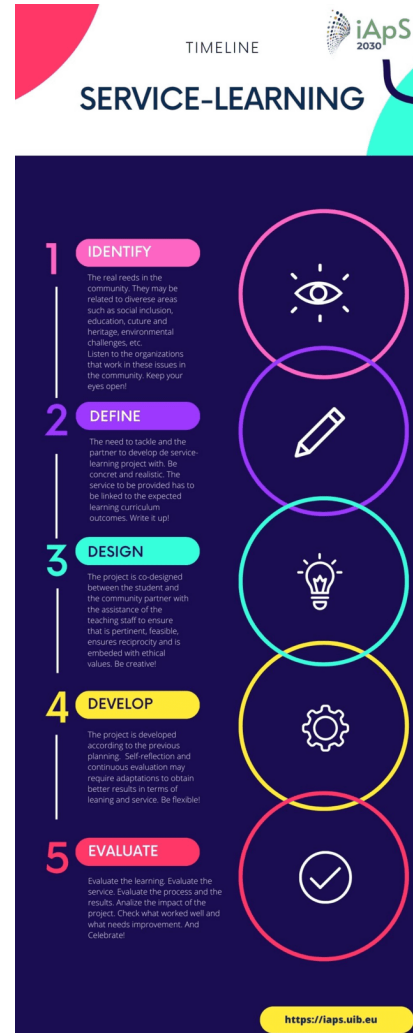
Students need time to process the contextual situation, their learnings and the experience of giving service. Self-reflection is also relevant for the students' academic evaluation. Teaching staff is also a reflective practitioner in Service-Learning.



Rewards

Education institutions & partners celebrate the learning, the service provided and the impact in the community. Rewards and recognition are useful to give visibility and to facilitate the sustainability of the projects.

<https://aps.uib.edu>



SERVICE - LEARNING

FROM A TO Z





-
1. Students' skills development
 2. Curriculum Development
 3. Students' civic engagement
 4. Sustainable development with the local community
 5. Vulnerable/ underrepresented groups
 6. Co-creation brings deeper awareness of environmental and societal challenges.

Community partners

Partnerships

- Universities
- Civic Organizations & Community
- Local authorities



Communication

1. Creativity
2. Imagination
3. Dialogics





1. Policy for quality assurance

Do higher education institutions have a policy for quality assurance and service-learning that is made public and forms part of their strategic management?

Are internal stakeholders developing and implementing this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external service-learning stakeholders?



2. Design and approval of programmes

Do higher education institutions have processes for the design and approval of their service-learning programmes?

Are service-learning programmes designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes?

Is the qualification resulting from a service-learning programme specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area?



3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Are institutions ensuring that service-learning programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in recreating the learning process and that the assessment of students reflects this approach?



4. Teaching staff

Are institutions assuring themselves of the service-learning competencies of their teachers?

Are they applying service-learning fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff



5. Learning resources and student support

Do institutions have appropriate funding for service-learning activities?

Are institutions ensuring that adequate and readily accessible service-learning resources and student support are provided?



6. Information management

Are institutions ensuring that they collect, analyse and use relevant service-learning information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities



7. Public information

Are institutions publishing information about their service-learning activities, including programmes, which are clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and readily accessible?



8. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

Are institutions monitoring and periodically reviewing their service-learning programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society?

Are these reviews leading to continuous improvement of the service-learning programme?



9. Cyclical external quality assurance

Are institutions undergoing external service-learning quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis?



10. Designing methodologies fit for purpose

Are institutions designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the service-learning aims and objectives set for them, while taking into account relevant regulations?

Are stakeholders involved in its design and continuous improvement?

Conclusions



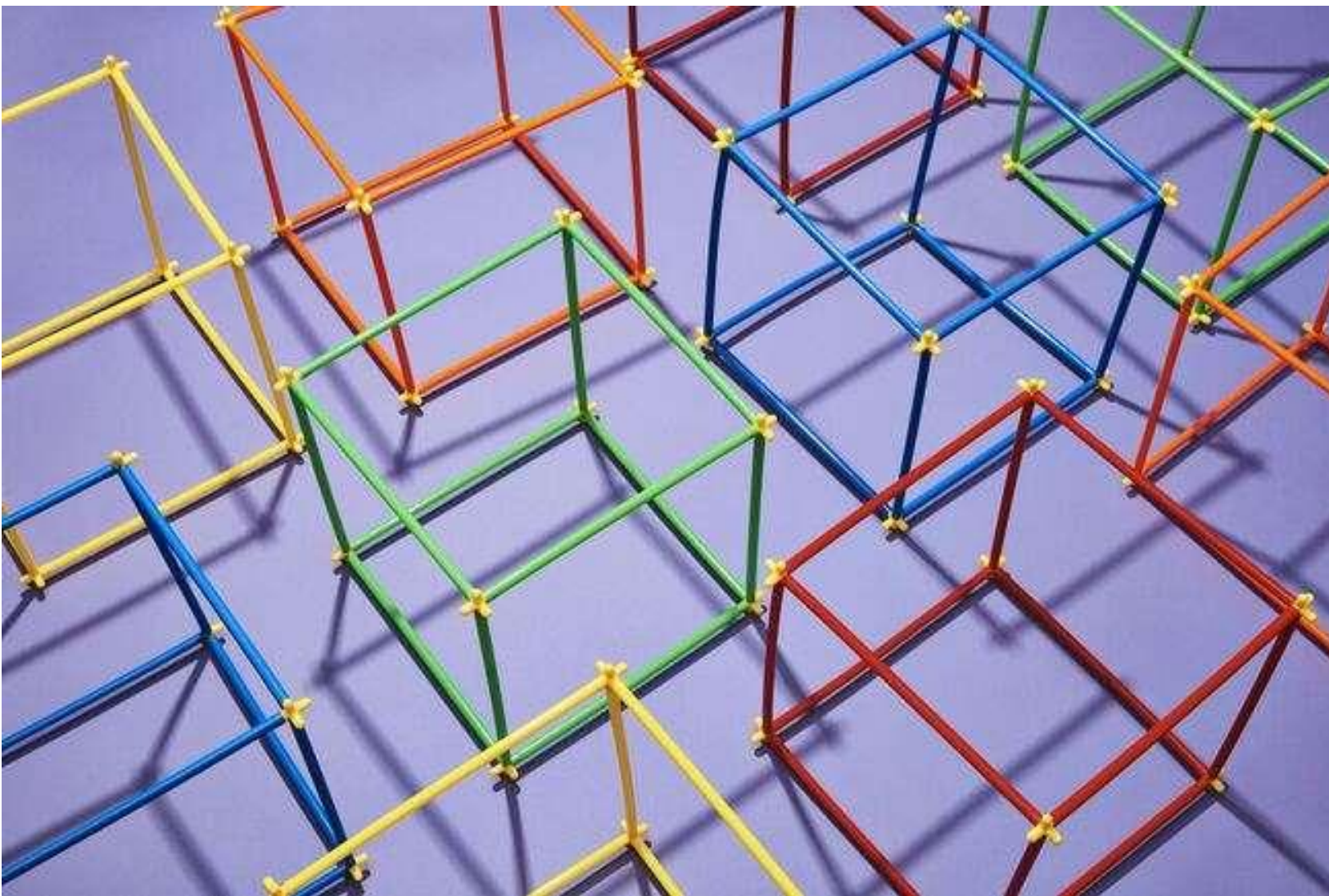
QUALITY ASSURANCE IS ALSO A QUESTION OF APPLYING TACIT AND EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE VIA SERVICE-LEARNING INHERENT DIVERSITY, CREATIVITY, IMAGINATION AND COMMUNICATION.



QUALITY ASSURANCE SHOULD TRANSFER KNOWLEDGE THROUGH STUDENTS' ACTIVE ENROLLMENT IN THEIR MICROSPHERE WITH FELLOW FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS, FOR EXAMPLE, AWAKENING A STRONG SENSE OF BREAKING PREJUDICES AMONG THEM.



QUALITY ASSURANCE SHOULD DEAL WITH SERVICE-LEARNING PROBLEMS SUCH AS OVERBURDENED STAKEHOLDERS, THE LACK OF INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT, AND THE NECESSITY TO FURTHER ENGAGE STUDENTS AND DEVELOP METHODS FOR APPLYING ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE IN COMMUNITY-ENGAGED PROJECTS.



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Thank you!

