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Recommendations for the promotion of Service-Learning in CIVIS Alliance

Approved by CIVIS Steering Committee on 28 August 2024

The CIVIS Alliance member universities

Here are the names of the universities and their acronyms as we use them in CIVIS.

Full member universities

AMU	Aix-Marseille Université
NKUA	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
UB	University of Bucharest
ULB	Université libre de Bruxelles
UofG	University of Glasgow
UNIL	University of Lausanne
UAM	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
SUR	Sapienza Università di Roma
PLUS	University of Salzburg
SU	Stockholm University
UT	University of Tübingen

Associate member universities

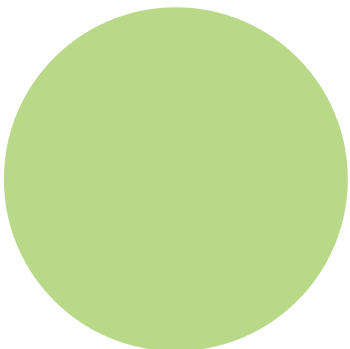
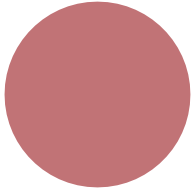
UH2C	Université Hassan II de Casablanca
UCAD	Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar
WITS	University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
MAK	Makerere University
UEM	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane
USF	Université de Sfax

CIVIS – Europe's Civic University Alliance

CIVIS is formed by the alliance of 11 leading research-intensive higher education institutions across Europe: Aix-Marseille Université, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Université libre de Bruxelles, University of Bucharest, University of Glasgow, University of Lausanne, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Sapienza Università di Roma, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Stockholm University and Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen. Six prestigious African universities join CIVIS as Associate Members: Université Hassan II de Casablanca, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Makerere University, Eduardo Mondlane University, Université de Sfax.

CIVIS brings together a community of more than 470,000 students and 58,000 staff members, including 35,000 academics and researchers in Europe alone. Including Associate Members, the Alliance counts 720,000 students and 75,000 staff members.

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1 Alliance
11 Universities
Countless Possibilities

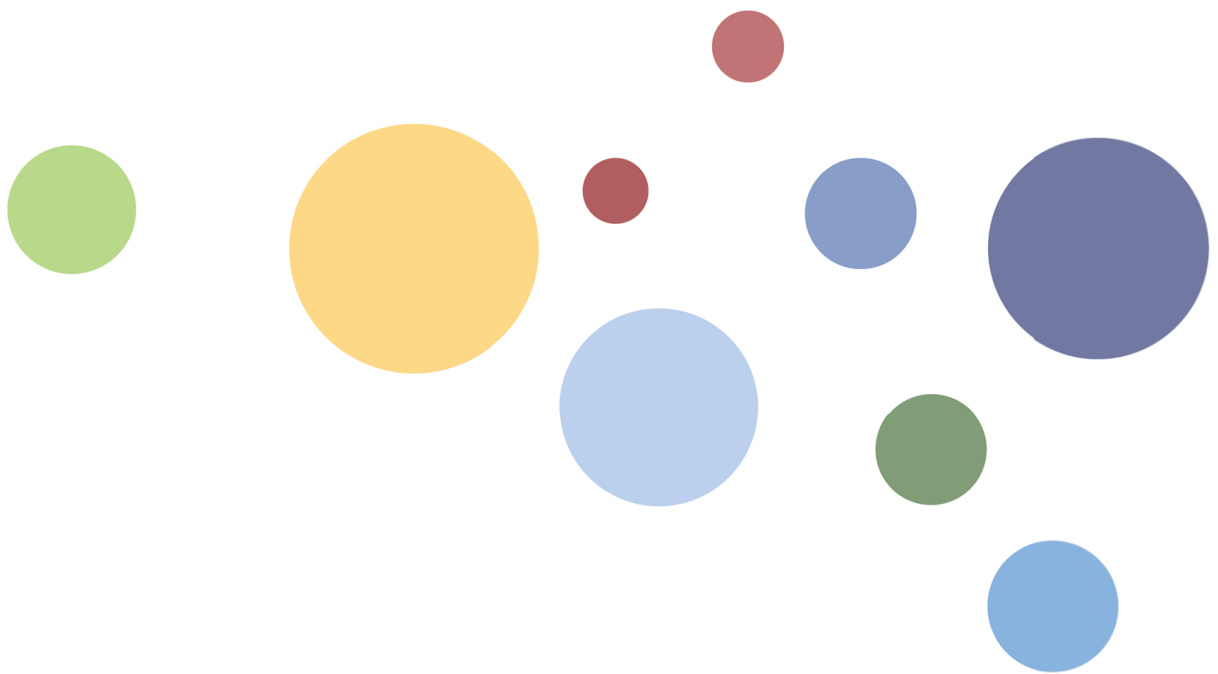
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

These recommendation guidelines for the promotion of Service-Learning in the CIVIS Alliance provide you with a comprehensive and coherent framework that aligns with European standards and the specific requirements of the CIVIS Alliance.

By adhering to the principles and commitments outlined in these guidelines, institutions within the CIVIS Alliance will foster meaningful and impactful service-learning experiences that benefit students, communities, higher education institutions and society at large.



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PREAMBLE

This Recommendation Guidelines aims to foster the integration of service-learning into Higher Education within the framework of CIVIS, Europe's Civic University Alliance, by promoting collaborative efforts that mutually benefit students, teachers, institutions, and community partners.

The Joint Mission Statement of the CIVIS Alliance, approved by the CIVIS Board of Rectors on 11-02-2022, states that:

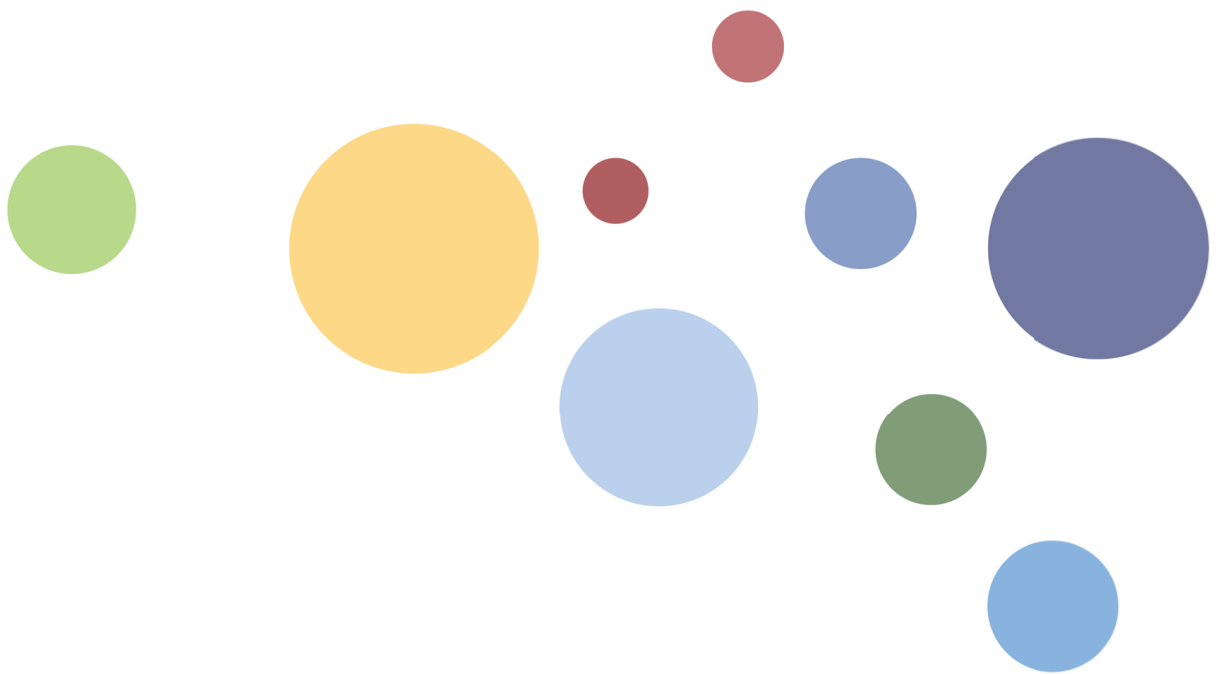
*By sharing our experiences and connecting with local and global partners, we want to challenge our practices. We also want our education, research, and global engagement to be inspired and strengthened by the people, cities and societies we serve. [...] **Service-learning** experiences, through community engagement, certifiable practical skills, and co-creation spaces for social innovation, are some of the shared instruments our Alliance will mobilize to assert its civic identity and help enrich its wider communities.*

In fact, service-learning is present across CIVIS in different Hubs, Streams and Work Packages. Examples of this pedagogical methodology are numerous projects developed at the Open Labs, training sessions for teachers and Open Lab coordinators, accredited joint educational offers, Erasmus+ projects, the Service-Learning Expert Group, and, above all, the rapidly increasing number of service-learning projects developed by teachers in the framework of their curricular teaching practice together with the students and social entities.

Moreover, service-learning is aligned with the Renewed European Agenda for Higher Education (2017; art. 2.2), which calls on universities to counter the increasing polarisation of society and distrust of democratic institutions by engaging more actively with the communities around them, and to "not ivory towers, but civic-minded learning communities connected to their communities" (2017; art. 2.2; p. 6)

This Recommendation Guidelines are made up of the following articles:

1. Purpose and Scope
2. Principles of service-learning
3. Commitment to Quality and Excellence
4. Recognition and Dissemination
5. Continuous Improvement
6. Roles and Responsibilities



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RECOMMENDATION GUIDELINES

1. Purpose and Scope

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 are focused on enriching learning in higher education, fostering civic responsibility and strengthening community engagement. Service-learning is recognized with ECTS (European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education, 2021).

Service-learning is a powerful active and collaborative teaching and learning approach that contributes to achieve the goal of education: to educate competent citizens capable of transforming our society.

Its integration in the curriculum could take different formats: integrated in the teaching syllabus of any subject, including regular courses, internships, final bachelor and masterthesis, or developed as specific service-learning courses. Regardless of how it is integrated into the curriculum, service-learning practices are always explicitly linked to the contents and competences to be developed by the students in the specific subjects and to social organizations.

2. Principles of service-learning

Service-learning experiences adhere to the following principles:

- **Academic Integration:** Service practices should be directly linked to the curriculum, enhancing students' academic learning and critical thinking.
- **Reflection:** Structured reflection activities should be incorporated to allow students to connect their service experiences with academic content and personal growth.
- **Community Partnership:** Projects should be developed in collaboration with community partners to address genuine community needs that are perceived as such by the beneficiary of the service in the community.
- **Reciprocity:** Both students and community partners benefit from the service-learning experience, fostering mutual respect, and understanding.
- **Empowerment:** Digital tools and resources should be leveraged to empower professors, students and community partners, enhancing project impact and accessibility, and facilitating the development of international service-learning projects.

3. Commitment to Quality and Excellence

To ensure high-quality service-learning practices, the following commitments are made:

- **Structured Support:** Institutions may provide structured support for students and faculty, including training, resources, and ongoing guidance. Institutionalization of service-learning would be recommended both at the level of the CIVIS institutions and at the central CIVIS structure. A strategic plan should be developed for this purpose.
- **Assessment and Evaluation:** Regular assessment and evaluation of service-learning practices could be conducted to ensure learning outcomes and community impact. Evaluation of the service-learning institutional programs is also necessary.
- **Sustainability:** Projects should be designed with sustainability in mind, aiming for long-term benefits and continued collaboration with community partners.

4. Recognition, Celebration and Dissemination

To promote the value of service-learning, CIVIS management and CIVIS institutions may:

- **Recognize and celebrate** the achievements of students, faculty, and community partners in service-learning.
 - Produce certificates for students, teaching staff and organisations that have taken part in university service-learning experiences.
 - Organize events to make university service-learning experiences more visible and to highlight their value.
 - Recognize the participation of teaching staff in university service-learning experiences in their evaluation as teachers and with other means, such as reduced teaching assignments.
- **Disseminate** best practices and successful project outcomes through different means such as CIVIS webpage, institutional webpages, publications, conferences, and digital platforms.
 - CIVIS management and universities should make service-learning experiences visible on their websites.
 - Universities could reward in some way teaching staff who participate in conferences and publish the service-learning experiences they have carried out.
 - Universities could reward in some way teaching staff who publish the results of their service-learning experiences.

5. Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is important, and it could be achieved through:

- **Regular review** and updating of service-learning practices and policies.
 - Related with practice:
 - Evaluation of the quality of the developed service-learning projects, measuring both academic success and community impact to ensure all participants benefit from the collaboration.
 - Mapping and evaluation of each university and inter-university service-learning experiences developed within the CIVIS Alliance.
 - Related with policy (strategic plan):
 - Examination of the service-learning training offered by CIVIS for teachers and educational managers.
 - Assessment of the plan to facilitate the implementation of service-learning at the CIVIS institutions.
 - Review the evaluation proposals to know the quality of the service-learning experiences.
 - Analysis of the strategies of the CIVIS Alliance for reinforcing cooperation between European universities and civil society organisations.
 - Monitoring of the strategies of the CIVIS Alliance for reinforcing cooperation between universities.
- **Engagement with service-learning networks and initiatives** to share knowledge and innovation.
 - European Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education (EASLHE)
 - European Observatory of Service-Learning in Higher Education (EOSLHE)
 - National Service-Learning networks (where they exist; i.e., Higher Education Network on Social Responsibility, in Germany (Hochschulnetzwerk); Spanish Association of Service-Learning in Higher Education -ApS(U); Flemish Network for Service-Learning in Higher Education; Central and Eastern European Service-Learning Network; Italian informal Service-Learning Network; Portuguese informal Service-Learning Network, ben:edu, in Switzerland; and Campus Engage, in Ireland.
 - Service-Learning central units at CIVIS institutions (where they exist; i.e., University of Tübingen, and Autonomous University of Madrid).

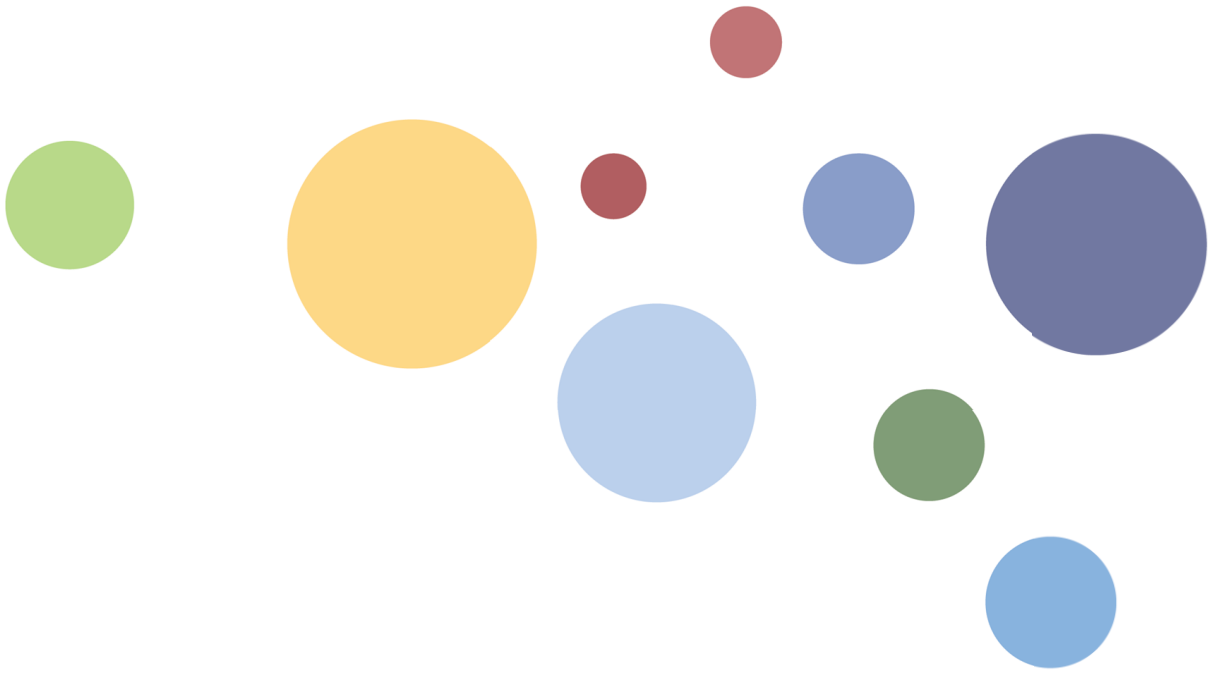
6. Roles and Responsibilities

- **CIVIS Alliance may:**
 - Promote and support the use of service-learning among the CIVIS institutions.
 - Support the creation of service-learning central units at the CIVIS institutions (where they do not exist).
 - Promote the integration of service-learning into the strategic plan and policies of CIVIS universities.
 - Disseminate CIVIS service-learning among other European Alliances.
 - Promote service-learning in the European Commission so that it creates programs and policies, and ensures funding for mobility actions and transnational projects.
- **Institutions may:**
 - Integrate service-learning into the academic curriculum at the different degrees and academic fields.
 - Provide faculty development and training/support for integrating service-learning effectively.
 - Facilitate partnerships with social entities that contribute to meeting genuine community needs and developing the service.
- **Faculty may:**
 - Design and implement service-learning experiences that align with academic goals and community impact.
 - Support and mentor students throughout the service-learning experience.
 - Encourage continuous reflection and improvement of service-learning practices based on student and partner feedback.
- **Students may:**
 - Actively participate in service-learning experiences contributing to meaningful projects that address social justice and sustainable development.
 - Engage in reflective activities to connect service experiences with academic learning.
 - Leverage the bounty of learning opportunities offered by community service experiences for developing civic values as responsibility, critical thinking, social justice, community engagement and sustainable development.
- **Community Partners may:**
 - Collaborate with institutions and faculty to identify the community's needs and design meaningful service projects.
 - Provide guidance and support to students during their service activities.
 - Participate in the evaluation and reflection processes to enhance project outcomes.

Conclusion

This Recommendation Guidelines for the promotion of Service-Learning in the CIVIS Alliance is designed to provide a comprehensive and coherent framework that aligns with European standards and the specific requirements of the CIVIS Alliance.

By adhering to the principles and recommendations outlined here, institutions within the CIVIS Alliance can foster meaningful and impactful service-learning experiences that benefit students, communities, higher education institutions and society at large.



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FURTHER INFORMATION

UT - Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen

- **The Open Lab** carries out transdisciplinary research projects – this is where citizens work together with researchers and students to develop possible solutions for the major global challenges of the 21st century.

For further information please visit our webpage: <https://uni-tuebingen.de/en/181798>
Contact person: Dr. Mareike Kardinal (mareike.kardinal@uni-tuebingen.de.)

- **Transdisciplinary Course Program and Civic Engagement:** CIVIS places a focus on social engagement. This is also to be reflected in teaching, in which academic learning and social engagement are specifically combined. The Transdisciplinary Course Programme & Civic Engagement team supports you in designing and implementing a local, an international, or an e-service-learning project.

For further information please visit our webpage: <https://uni-tuebingen.de/en/198853>
Contact person: Dr. Iris-Niki Nikolopoulos, civic-engagement@tracs.uni-tuebingen.de

UAM - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

- [Service Learning \(ApS\) UAM: https://www.uam.es/uam/en/estudios/aprendizaje-servicio](https://www.uam.es/uam/en/estudios/aprendizaje-servicio)
- School of Teacher Training and Education: https://www.uam.es/Profesorado/Aprendizaje-Servicio_P/1446753712252.htm?language=es
- Treatment of SL projects at UAM: <https://www.uam.es/uam/media/doc/1606943467517/rat-prroyectos-aprendizaje-servicios--aps-.pdf>
- Service-Learning course of the Training Program for UAM Teachers: <https://formaciondocente.uam.es/course/1622>
- SL at CIVIS Open Labs: <https://civis.eu/en/engage/open-labs/civis-open-lab-projects-madrid>
- Contact person: Dr Elena López-de-Arana and Dr María Luisa Santos, apsuam@uam.es

SUR - Sapienza Università di Roma

- [Service-Learning in Sapienza](#): Through coordinated actions promoted by the educational structures of Sapienza, Service-Learning methodology is spreading among the numerous degree courses of the University. The [Teaching and Learning Center - Sapienza](#) has begun a process of consolidating the methodology with numerous training and dissemination projects among the teachers of the various scientific fields.
- [Non-Formal Education](#): Sapienza promotes non-formal training activities to enrich the students' and citizens' CVs for upskilling purposes, including service-learning projects.
- [Outreach Activities](#): Sapienza fosters application, valorization, dissemination and know-hows for social changes by: (I) engaging and involving communities, organizations, companies, governmental bodies, and institutions external to academia; (II) working together to produce social impacts able to make a difference in the citizens' and communities' quality of life.
- [Third Mission Projects](#): projects funded by SUR aimed at fostering societal development through technology transfer, public engagement, lifelong learning, and community service.
- Contacts: formazionecontinua.sapienza@uniroma1.it; flavia.baccani@uniroma1.it; giuliano.santangelivalenzani@uniroma1.it

AMU - Aix-Marseille Université

- **CIVIS OpenLab of AMU:** Designed as open and collaborative spaces, CIVIS Open Labs' mission is to create a meeting space where the university and society exchange and co-construct projects from a multidisciplinary approach and develop innovative and inclusive initiatives for high-impact solutions. OpenLabs promote service-learning in their projects.

Contact- OpenLab Coordinator: valerie.caraguuel@univ-amu.fr
 Website: <https://www.univ-amu.fr/en/public/civis-open-labs>

- **Aix-Marseille University student commitment programme** – called IdeAL – aims to stimulate, support and promote students' social actions. It is based on a service-learning approach with academic supervision and support.

Contact: Student Engagement Project Manager, isabelle.BRUNIAU-DI-MONTE@univ-amu.fr
 Website: <https://www.univ-amu.fr/fr/public/programme-dengagement-etudiant>

UB - University of Bucharest

- **The CIVIS Open Lab – UB** is built around a local team (1 coordinator, 3 educational leaders, 1 student). Role of the team: 1. contribute to identify stakeholders; prepare the presentation event; 3. moderate meetings; 4. be part of the working groups to promote discussion and brainstorming; 5. provide information to the stakeholders about prior university experiences; 6. wrap up and extract conclusions from the working groups, and find synergies within the different ideas and stakeholders; 7. be in charge of the internal development of service-learning programs and interact with the people working towards the same goal in the rest of Universities. Mission of the Open Lab: to respond to the needs and challenges of the stakeholders through the implementation of a vivid roundtable where they can work together with the university on finding creative and innovative solutions to local problems.

Contact: Magdalena Iordache Platis (magdalena.platis@unibuc.ro).

NKUA - National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

- **CIVIS OpenLab of NKUA:** NKUA Open Labs operate under the umbrella of CIVIS Alliance with the methodology of work adopted by all other Open Labs of CIVIS Universities. CIVIS I generated five (5) local projects and one (1) more with transnational perspective. In CIVIS II it is anticipated that most projects will have a transnational approach. service-learning is an integral part of these projects.

Contact- OpenLab Coordinator: mmouliou@arch.uoa.gr
 Website: <https://civis.eu/en/engage/open-labs/civis-open-lab-athens>

UNIL - University of Lausanne

- The **CIVIS Open Lab at UNIL** conducts transdisciplinary and participatory research projects and is actively collaborating with various entities within the UNIL. This includes the academic community, local Open Labs with extensive expertise in outreach, collaborative action research, and participatory research, as well as their partners.

More information on the webpage: <https://civis.eu/en/engage/open-labs/civis-open-lab-lausanne>
 or contact the Open Lab coordinator Dr. Christèle Aubry (christele.aubry@unil.ch)