



Association of International Education Administrators
Leaders in International Higher Education

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AIEA Recognizes Universitat Rovira i Virgili the 2024 Innovative Excellence in Internationalization Award

Washington D.C. (February 20, 2024)— The Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA) is pleased to present the Innovative Excellence in Internationalization Award to the Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV), based in Tarragona, Spain, in recognition of its role in creating, expanding, and sustaining a global training program on internationalization of higher education for non-academic staff.

Internationalization leaders work tirelessly, often with limited resources and modest institutional support, but always with passion, vision, and commitment to meeting their institution’s mission and goals. Some of this work is more than just effective; it is outstanding, inspirational, and replicable. The goals of the Innovative Excellence in Internationalization Award are intentionally aligned with inspirational and creative leadership in advancing comprehensive internationalization and with the principles of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI), and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Innovation in Internationalization Award aims to recognize the impact of these creative efforts.

URV’s Systemic University Change Towards Internationalization (SUCTI) project was officially born as an Erasmus+ European project, spearheaded by URV. The project engaged a consortium of six HEIs from five different European countries and yielded significant results, benefitting more than 200 non-academic staff members.

During the SUCTI project, 18 non-academic staff members (three per institution) were trained to become SUCTI trainers, in a train-the-trainers intervention, equipping them with the tools and skills to prepare and facilitate in-house training courses at their respective institutions. This peer-to-peer approach, coupled with an interactive and experiential methodology, empowered staff members and resulted in successful outcomes at all participating institutions.



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The final in-house courses delivered at all institutions have a duration of 12 to 14 hours, usually spread out over various days within the institution's working hours. They are delivered in the official language of the institution, thus reducing some of the obstacles that some staff may have to engage in internationalization, with the final purpose being to reduce all existing barriers to reach all staff.

SUCTI's program content includes intercultural communication, trends in international higher education, internationalization strategy, and playing the role of an international student. SUCTI was concluded in 2019, and results were presented at major conferences in the field, including AIEA. After the official end of the initial project, URV decided to continue delivering the SUCTI train-the-trainers model courses to all interested institutions. Since then, there have been ten editions of the SUCTI train-the-trainers, involving 194 SUCTI trainers worldwide, in Europe, Latin America and Asia. Internally, the URV continues to offer its in-house course for staff, having trained over 130 non-academic staff members in internationalization. AIEA Executive Director Dr. Darla K. Deardorff remarked, "URV's comprehensive approach to global training of non-academic staff on internationalization of higher education is as unprecedented as impactful and inspirational. The focus on intercultural communication is especially important as part of innovative internationalization efforts."

AIEA congratulates Universitat Rovira i Virgili as the 2024 Innovative Excellence in Internationalization Award recipient.

About AIEA:

The Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA) is a member organization that equips leaders to shape the future of higher education in a global context.

AIEA advances strategic transformational approaches to internationalization of higher education; empowers those who lead such efforts; convenes global conversation on key issues; and partners with other organizations around the world to develop sustainable, forward-looking perspectives.