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## Introduction to the Exhibition of the Work of Students Learning with Communities

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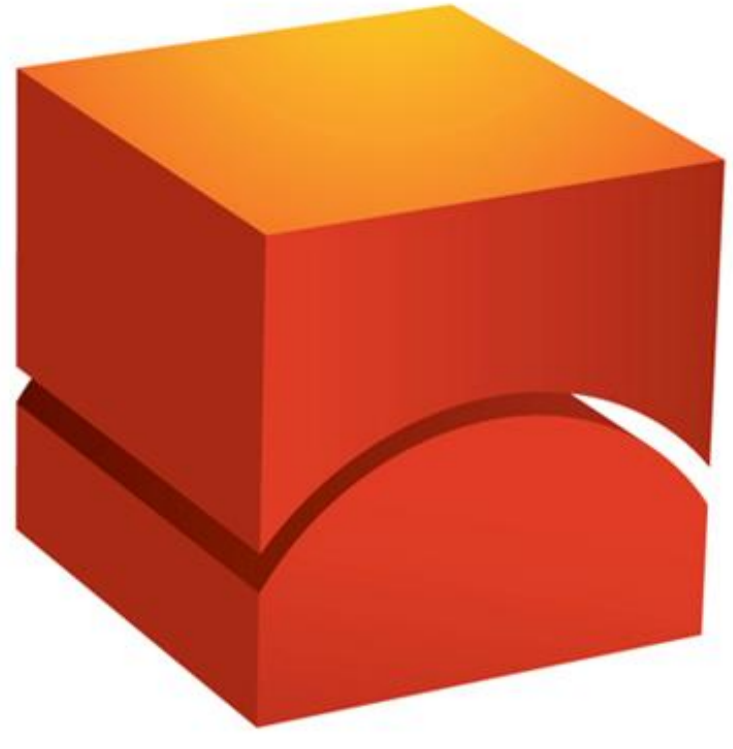
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students learning with communities

# Welcome and introduction



Students Learning with Communities



## This exhibition

Over 1300 students across DIT in 2011/12 participated in course-based collaborative projects with over 100 community partners, applying their theoretical learning to real-world challenges, supervised by their lecturers. These projects are supported by DIT's Programme for Students Learning With Communities. One in three undergraduate programmes across DIT offers students the opportunity to engage in this collaborative learning with communities. This exhibition showcases the exciting work that these innovative collaborations have produced, and we welcome you to it.

## Thanks

This exhibition, and this programme, would not have happened without the generous collaborative work by DIT students and staff and a wide range of community partners. The staff of the Programme for Students Learning With Communities would like to thank all participants for their hard work and continuing commitment. We would also like to thank our funders – DIT Access and Civic Engagement Office and the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n° 244264 (the PERARES project) (2009-13). Thanks to Dublin City Council for this wonderful exhibition space.

## About the Programme

Students Learning with Communities is an innovative programme which involves students and staff working with community groups and not-for-profit organisations for mutual benefit, to meet the learning needs of the students and to further the community's goals. It is based in DIT's Access and Civic Engagement Office, which aims to address educational disadvantage, promote civic engagement, and widen participation in Higher Education.

The concept of community-based learning (also known as service-learning) and community-based research is well established in the US higher education system and in mainland Europe, and DIT is at the forefront in developing and sustaining it in Ireland. The Programme for Students Learning With Communities received European Framework 7 research funding to develop community-based research in DIT, as part of a network of 26 European partners. The new National Strategy of Higher Education to 2030 specifically recommends service-learning as a valuable learning and teaching method.

## Contact us

This exhibition may give you ideas about how you could get involved in such projects, whether you are a student, staff member, or member of a community group or voluntary organisation. We would be happy to talk to you if you'd like to get involved.

Please contact us at [slwc@dit.ie](mailto:slwc@dit.ie) or 402 7616.

