

Fostering Global Learning through Virtual Internationalisation – at Home: A Cross - Cultural Science Collaboration between Ireland and India

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Abstract

With the view of fostering the development of global learners among our students, particularly the ones that cannot participate in study-abroad programs, an Internationalisation at Home (IaH) science project was organised between a co-hort of 2nd year applied science students in SETU and a similar co-hort of students in Kamla Nehru University (KNM), India. IaH events have shown to foster cultural diverse learning, based on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principals as well as incentive cross campus, and cross-country collaborations that might be beneficial for the students in their future careers. The project focused on protein extraction from Indian waste products and culturally informed product formulation by the Irish students with all communications between students from both institutions being conducted virtually using WhatsApp. This was followed by a MTeams webinar where each team presented their final products. A survey was administered to 20 participants (10 from each country) to collect both quantitative and qualitative data of their experience. Results were analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic area analysis. The findings suggest that students perceive to have gained valuable intercultural skills, improved communication abilities, and increased awareness of global diversity. However, the project also highlights variability in engagement levels particularly linked with communication challenges.

Keywords

Internationalisation-at-home, Ireland-India, Higher education, Science IaH.