Newsletter #7, HEIDI project

Digital action at HEIs as a catalyst for social change in the COVID-19 crisis

HEIDI - General News

DA participants help their communities (in many ways)!

Following the Co-Creation workshop which took place in Malta (organised by our **UM** team) back in August, we gifted our student participants with vouchers to use at SCAN Ltd. a local computer and tech store. One of the participants of this event, **Olivia Schneider**, has decided to pay her vouchers forward and has donated them to Dar Hosea, a local NGO which helps vulnerable women and children.

HEIDI - Past events

ERASMUS Festival 2022

On the 13th of October 2022, **CIP** participated in the **Erasmus+ Festival** in Plateia Eleftherias, Nicosia Cyprus. Joining in on a day of festivities and knowledge exchange, the STEM department had the opportunity to offer workshops on Digital Actions and more specifically the makers movement. Participants were introduced to the use of 3D printing technologies as a tool that can facilitate social innovation and were invited to discussions with our staff on the aims and objectives of the HEIDI project.

UM HEIDI team makes headlines!

THINK Magazine, the university's publication interview the **UM** team about HEIDI and what the project means to both higher eduction institutions and community members. THINK also invited the team to speak about the project and the activities we've been organising at their quarterly soapbox event; a super get-together for academics and the general public to meet and for us to present our research in under three minutes! After we spoke, there was a really energetic Q&A about what digital action means, and how we can increase engagement through social equality. You can read about it here.

Smart Agriculture and Digital Action

HEIDI's **CIP** team joined forces with the PermaVET and AGRIcharisma projects to introduce VET students in the school of Agriculture in Paralimni, Cyprus, the development possibilities offered by digital innovation and participation in digital actions in the field of smart agriculture. Smart sensors and microcontrollers for irrigation, agriculture gaming applications, and the utilisation of these in restructuring teams in agricultural production were some of the topics explored.

"Walking Malta" took the streets!

It's been a busy few weeks for the **UM** HEIDI team! In September Dawra Madwarna, a local NGO, invited the HEIDI team to showcase a walkability app during a webinar that focused on local planning and place-making. App developer Dr Carlos Canas discussed how **Walking Malta** and Citizen Science could be used in a local context for monitoring areas of beauty and also areas that needed a bit more love and attention. The app is designed so that people may use an existing app, WhatsApp, to send images with hashtags to describe what their find while walking. The data is then populated on a map to show the walkability of localities.

During European Local Democracy week on 22nd Oct, the HEIDI team took to the streets in Senglea, Malta at a community gardening picnic. We showed people how to use the **Walking Malta app** to log images that showed areas of their locality that were safe and pleasant to walk about in, and areas that showed need of repair and cleaning. We found that locals were not aware of concepts such as Citizen Science but used WhatsApp regularly and therefore we were able to transfer knowledge on how to use Walking Malta easily and effectively. People were taken on mini tours of the streets they lived on and shown how to capture and send the images.
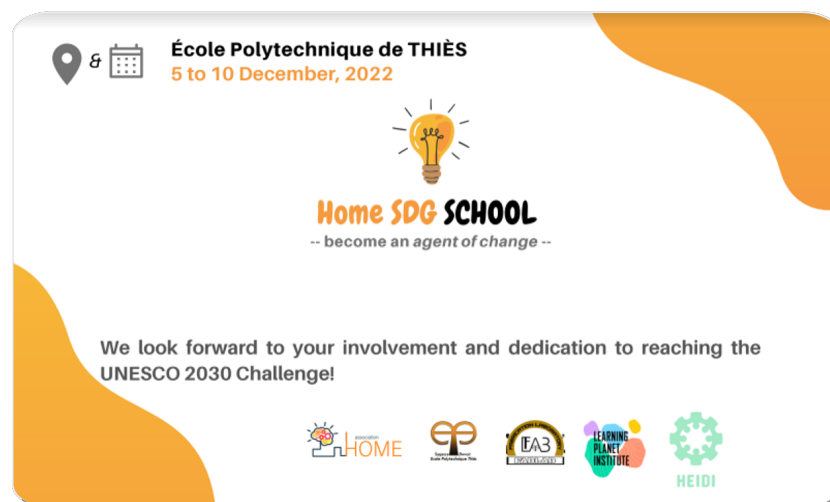
You can find out more about **Walking Malta** here!

HEIDI - What's next

SDG winter school in Senegal!

UP, in collaboration with Lecturers Without Borders and HOME Association (two NGOs founded by UP staff and students) is organizing a winter school in Thiès, Senegal, in which local students use the Makerspace in the École Polytechnique de Thiès to design and prototype solutions to local challenges related to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This event started on **Sunday, Nov 6th**, with a hybrid event with invited

speakers from 4 countries and students joining in person from 2 cities in Senegal. The practical activities of the winter school will begin on **December 5th**.

Roundtables with HEI staff and with communities (UCL)

In November, HEIDI's **UCL** team is holding three roundtables on **"Understanding Digital Action"**. We are inviting anyone who either works at an HEI (Higher Education Institution), or in a voluntary organisation or community group, who is interested in organising Digital Action activities - or for whom organising such activities is part of your job - to join us. You don't need to have participated - you just need to be interested! We will discuss such topics as:

- Do you do this work as part of your job, or as voluntary or community work?
- Do you have ideas about how HEIs could support their staff or students in running such activities, or in improving their digital skills or communications in order to do so?
- Do you have ideas about how HEIs could work with voluntary or community groups to share expertise, best practices, resources, or anything else?
- Do you want to know more about what methods you can use for Digital Action, or how to design successful citizen science and similar projects?
- Would you like to meet other HEI staff, or voluntary organisation or community group members, with similar interests?

These roundtables are designed to bring together people interested in these groups, members of them, or staff who work in different roles and in different faculties across HEIs, to contribute their thoughts and experiences. Over the one hour sessions we will explore your stories, hopes, challenges and what you have observed about the needs and requirements of participants in and

organisers of Digital Action events, whether these are part of your work or a day-to-day voluntary activity.

Depending on whether your work or interest mostly takes place within an HEI or not, or simply depending on your day and time preference, you may attend any of the following:

HEI Staff Roundtable - 9/11 4pm GMT

We will discuss challenges for Digital Action,and how their HEI can provide them with support for initiatives such as Digital Action to take place. Register here!

Community groups Roundtable - 15/11 5:30pm GMT

This is a specific roundtable designed to bring together anyone from around the world who are members of community groups, working with them, or interested in them. Register here!

Voluntary Organisations Roundtable - 17/11 5:30pm GMT

This is a specific roundtable designed to bring together anyone from around the world who are members of voluntary organisations (NGOs or associations). Register here!

In December **UCL** will be following up on our roundtables to understand the challenges, opportunities, needs and requirements for Digital Action projects with **a co-creation event**. This event is specifically designed for people from the HE academic or support staff community (by this we mean professors, lecturers, postgraduate teaching assistants, librarians, administrative staff, IT staff, those in support roles for both research and teaching, and more) and in the voluntary-sector (by this we mean people who are members of, contribute to, benefit from, or work in or with organisations who seek to create social impact such as charities, non-governmental, non-profit or not-for-profit, community groups or voluntary organisations). In the event we will co-create training materials to support anyone from any of these groups to successfully run a Digital Action project. You can use the link below to register to attend:

Higher Education academic and support staff and voluntary-sector co-creation event - 8th December 17:30-18:30 (GMT) register here

Open Data Hackathon in Greece

Web2Learn, in collaboration with the department of French language (prof. Euaggelia Mousouri) at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, will coordinate the participation of higher education students at the **Open Data Hackathon** that will run at the **19th-20th of November**.

The hackathon will give the opportunity to students with no prior experience in digital action to engage in a two-days event during which they will develop their own Challenges by using open data for educational and social purposes.

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