

APAIE 2024



PERTH, AUSTRALIA 4-8 MARCH 2024

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Collaborating for sustainable impact: partnerships across the Asia Pacific

APAIE Perth 4 - 8 March 2024



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Session 7B: Weds 6th March, 09:30 – 10:00

Creating a sustainable relationship between Asian and European partners

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Creating a sustainable relationship between Asian and European Partners

Fontys University of Applied Sciences
Osaka Gakuin University



Outline

1. Introduction
2. Background: Impact of COVID-19
3. Virtual Intercultural Sessions
4. Erasmus+
5. Outcomes
6. Conclusion

Introduction

Fontys University of Applied Sciences

Ms. Arian van Hulsel



Ms. Michelle Greene



Ms. Sarah De Ponti



Osaka Gakuin University

Ms. Midori Hatanaka



Ms. Tao Meng



Introduction



University of Applied Sciences

Location: Venlo, the Netherlands
Student Number: 4,000



Location: Suita City, Osaka, Japan
Student Number: 5,600

**We signed the student exchange agreement in 2009.
We have exchanged 58 students since then.**

Background: Impact of COVID-19

2020



**In the middle of difficulty,
lies opportunity.**

by Albert Einstein

Background: Impact of COVID-19

To ensure a continuous opportunity for students to gain intercultural perspectives, OGU enlisted the help of Arian, a staff member at Fontys, to conduct virtual intercultural sessions.

She graciously accepted our request and recommended using the book 'The Culture Map' by Erin Meyer.

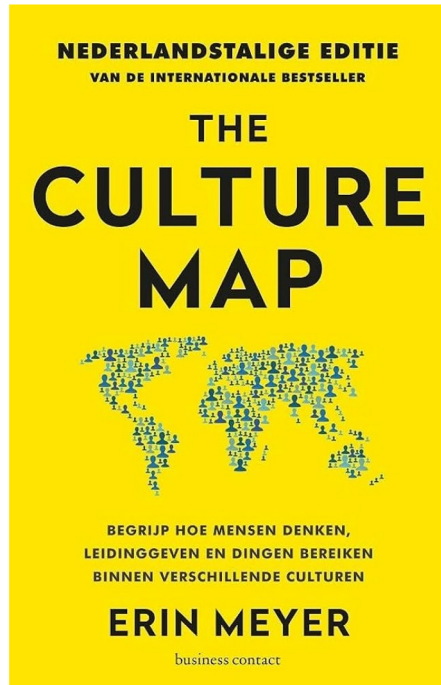
Everything started from here!

Virtual Intercultural Sessions

Why did OGU choose Fontys, our European partner?

- 1) We have an established strong relationship.
- 2) The time difference somehow works better than in North America.
- 3) The language of instruction is English.
- 4) Fontys has experience conducting intercultural sessions for students and faculty members.

Virtual Intercultural Sessions



Arian led the virtual intercultural sessions from 2020 to 2023, focusing on

Chapter 1, 'Listening to the Air: Communicating Across Cultures'

Chapter 6, 'The Head or the Heart: Two Types of Trust and How They Grow'

from 'The Culture Map'.

We selected these two chapters as we believed they presented content that was easily understandable for students.

Virtual Intercultural Sessions

2020-2021



- The sessions were conducted as part of extracurricular activities.
- They were non-credit bearing.
- Students interested in gaining intercultural perspectives attended these sessions.

Virtual Intercultural Sessions

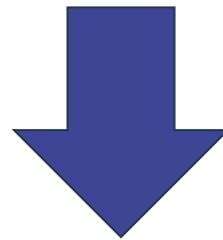
2022-2023

- OGU introduced a new course titled 'International Relations around Japan' (a two-credit-hour course).
- The 13-week course incorporated two virtual intercultural sessions.
- This course served as pre-departure preparation for outgoing students.

Nearly 100 OGU students joined the sessions from 2020 to 2023.

Virtual Intercultural Sessions

Continuing the virtual intercultural sessions from 2020 to 2021 paved the way for the next phase. In 2022, Fontys decided to submit an application for ***Erasmus+ funding***, available for both students and staff.



The application was accepted in 2022 and 2023.

Erasmus+ and Key Action 171

What is Erasmus +?

Erasmus+ is a program of the European Union (EU) that supports education, training, youth, and sports. It is designed to enhance the skills and employability of individuals and to modernize education, training, and youth work across Europe. The program provides opportunities for students, staff, and institutions to participate in various activities, including student exchanges, staff training, and collaborative projects between educational institutions.

Key Action 1 KA171

International Credit Mobility project that enables student, doctoral and staff mobility to specific countries outside the EU

What makes this unique is that the funding extends to cover non-EU countries.

Erasmus+: KA171 Funding

KA171 funding in 2022 and 2023

			2022			2023		
Country	Activity type	Direction	No of participants	Duration	Funding per person	No of participants	Duration	Funding per person
Japan	Student	Incoming	2	150	€ 7,500	4	150	€ 6,250
	Student	Outgoing	2	150	€ 6,750	3	150	€ 4,125
	Staff	Incoming	2	7	€ 3,120	2	12	€ 3,920
	Staff	Outgoing	2	10	€ 3,800	1	6	€ 4,160

This funding covers both students and staff expenses to foster the development of global perspectives and intercultural skills.

Erasmus+: KA171 Funding

How the funding elevated mutual learning and expanded collaboration initiatives in 2022:

<OGU>

Two students who received the funding would not have been able to study abroad otherwise. The funding enabled them to gain valuable experiences.

<OGU>

Two staff members who received the support would not have been able to travel to Fontys otherwise. This opportunity helped us learn more about our partner and explore potential future collaboration possibilities.

Erasmus+: KA171 Funding Call 2024

Due to the valuable experience in the previous rounds, we applied to continue the programme and hope to build further types of collaboration in the future such as COIL programmes.

The next round aims to enhance collaboration in academic fields and facilitate two-way student exchanges.

Outcomes

Based on the survey conducted after the sessions, students reported that the sessions helped them in the following ways:

- Understand cultural differences and their impact on people in various ways.
- Learn new and interesting aspects about individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Feel motivated to explore more about themselves and the world around them.

Outcomes

All students responded that the sessions were useful in gaining new global perspectives and described them as eye-opening experiences.

Further, it was noted that the sessions proved *even more beneficial when students actually studied abroad.*



Outcomes

Here are some comments from students after returning from their study abroad:

- 'I sometimes felt difficulties in communicating with people from different backgrounds, but the sessions helped me accept who they were.'
- 'Encountering something different from my own culture made me think about how cultural background influences what people say and how they act.'
- 'I changed my communication methods based on where people were from, utilizing knowledge gained from the sessions. This helped me avoid trouble caused by cultural differences.'

Outcomes

During their study abroad experiences, all students found the virtual intercultural sessions useful:

- To understand intercultural aspects of studying abroad and living in a foreign country.
- To communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- To establish relationships with people they encountered.



Outcomes

Additionally, staff exchanges facilitated a deeper understanding between institutions and opened up new collaborative possibilities:

<From Fontys to OGU>



<From OGU to Fontys>



Conclusion

- This initiative emerged in response to the challenges posed by the pandemic; however, it remains relevant in the post-pandemic era.
- The success of this initiative was built on the strong ties between partner universities, enhancing our relationship.
- The funding played a significant role in helping both students and staff gain global perspectives and develop intercultural skills.

The accumulation of small steps leads to a big stride.

**“It always seems impossible
until it’s done.”**

by Nelson Mandela

Thanks for joining our session today!

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