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# **The FRIENDS Project: Embracing Intercultural Engagement and Cultural Diversity in the Curriculum**

## **HARMONY Project: Conference and Project Meeting**

24 March 2022

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# FRIENDS versus HARMONY

- Internationalisation at Home (IaH) across Asia
- IaH State of the Art Infographics
- IaH Capacity Building Webinars
- Digital Storytelling
- Student Boot Camp
- FRIENDS Teahouses.



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# FRIENDS in a Nutshell

- Academic network of 16 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
- 5 Partner Countries from Asia and 4 Programme Countries
- 12 Partner Country HEIs from Asia, namely 2 BT, 2 KH, 2 MY, 3 PH, 3 TH
- 4 Programme Country HEIs from Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Turkey
- Project eligibility period: 2018-2022
- Approved project funding: 999 626,00 EUR.



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# FRIENDS Theoretical Background

- **The Internationalisation at Home (IaH) concept**

*“The purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments” (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 12).*

- **Intercultural competence definition**

*“the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (Deardoff, 2006, p. 247).*

# FRIENDS Main Objective

*To strengthen the involved Asian universities' internationalisation capabilities and to develop their students' global competence through the purposeful **integration of intercultural dimensions** into the universities' formal and informal curriculum.*



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# Intercultural Passport Virtual Module

- Thematic coverage and teaching and learning methodologies
- Intercultural Awareness and Cultural Diversity (IACD) MOOC
- Digital storytelling
- Assessment methods
- Student workload and recognition of learning outcomes.



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# Intercultural Passport & Curriculum Enhancement

- Over **12 000** students across the 12 Asian HEIs in FRIENDS completed the IACD MOOC
- Over **650** digital stories crafted at consortium level
- Over **650** Intercultural Passports awarded across the 12 Asian HEIs in FRIENDS
- **78%** of engaged students claim to be more cognizant of global skills importance
- **72%** confirmed they feel more confident when interacting with other cultures

# FRIENDS Teahouses

- Mission, vision, values
- Home Away from Home Programme
- Digital storytelling: mentoring, support, assessment
- Intercultural Passport award
- Intercultural festivals, social gatherings, cultural events
- Management and daily operation.



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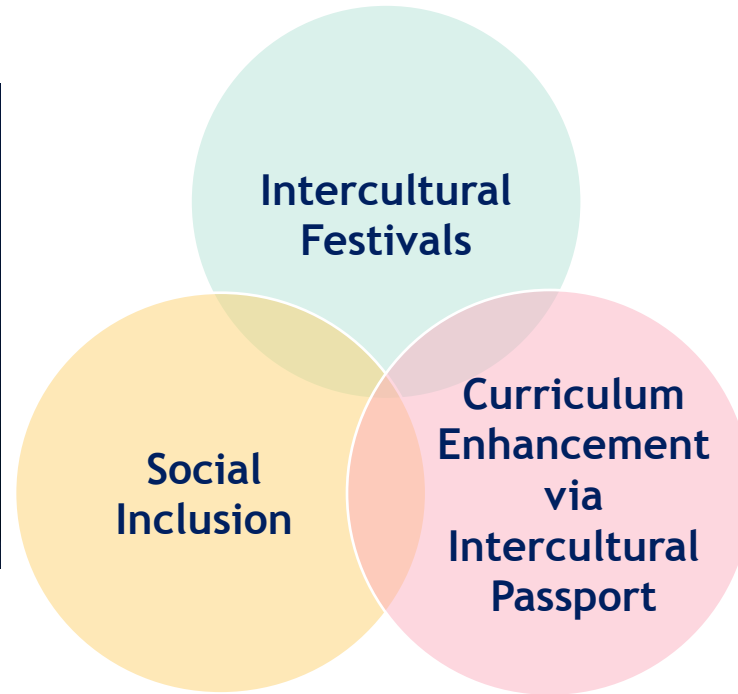




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# FRIENDS Teahouse: Expose to Experience



# FRIENDS Students' Testimonials

With the Teahouse being located in a prominent area, students are well aware of the importance of being able to interact with each other regardless of their background.

Through the Teahouse, here are loads of cultural events every year, thus providing us a better understanding of different cultures.

Students are able to complete the modules through the IACD MOOC at their own pace.

With the roll-out of the IACD MOOC for first semester students, this has certainly spread the cultural awareness for students!

Students are given the freedom and creativity in the IACD module, including for the assessment.

Through the FRIENDS project, the university encourages the students to bring out the best of their culture to remember not only their loved ones but also who they are really meant to be.



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**Thank you for your time and attention.  
Looking forward to making new friends!**

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