

**Title:**                   **Challenges and opportunities for academic developers working with international collaborative partnerships**

**Presenter:**           **Bridget Middlemas, Jo Peat and K.P Jaikiran**  
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### **Session Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Understand the ways in which international collaborative activities and projects can benefit the academic development team as well as the whole institution
- Have a deeper understanding of the long-term benefits and potential impacts when collaborating with an international partner
- Participate in a real-time “virtual internationalisation” activity with Kerala State University
- Confidently use Roehampton’s resource pack on “*Working with international collaborative partnerships*” with colleagues and programme teams at their own institutions
- Understand the roles of the EU, the British Council and the Association of Commonwealth Scholars as funding bodies for collaborative partnerships

### **Session Outline**

International collaboration can be a messy, confusing business as different stakeholders from diverse backgrounds attempt to work together, often remotely and asynchronously. Adams, Gurney and Marshall (2007) note that effective collaborations can lead to faculty participation in cutting-edge networks and innovations. Willis and Strivens (2015) argue, however, that the role of academic developers in international contexts continues to be under-reported.

The Department of Learning and Teaching at Roehampton has been involved in a number of international initiatives, both as main partners and through collaboration with academic faculties (E-TALEB, FLAIR HEART & PICASA). Being a central unit in the university has been of considerable advantage as one of the key skills for success is the experience of being able to communicate effectively with stakeholders at different levels (personal, programme level and institutional), not only so that teams are involved in planning and review processes, but also to build working relationships with those from very different academic traditions (Baskerville, 2013; Willis & Strivens, 2015). Historically, international collaboration necessitated outward mobility of those involved, but our own research indicates that “virtual internationalisation” activities can also provide excellent scaffolding for projects (Middlemas & Peat, 2015).

Many projects involve partners working on distinct workpackages, with set tasks to be completed. However, sometimes the collaboration is more organic as relationships and understandings develop over a longer time period. One example of this is Roehampton's involvement with the FLAIR Scheme in India, through which we host early career academics for 5-6 weeks every spring. Both initiatives have been very positive for all involved and have led to further collaborations and projects.

This session will review some of the challenges presented by international collaborations, and explore the potential benefits to all parties involved. The examples discussed will illustrate the importance of having a genuine interest in the aims of the project in order to build credibility in unfamiliar institutional settings (Willis & Strivens, 2015). The session will enable participants to identify future collaborative opportunities, and understand how such experiences can really benefit their work as academic developers.

### Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

20 mins	Introduction / presentation: "Challenges and opportunities for academic developers working with international collaborative partnerships"
15 mins	Workshop activity - Sharing current practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is happening at your own institution?</li> <li>• How can these collaborations contribute to wider institutional discussions and policy initiatives (such as internationalisation of the curriculum; CPD for international staff; induction programmes for new international students; research opportunities)</li> <li>• What is the role of the academic development team?</li> </ul>
15 mins	Working with collaborative partners – skype interview with Dr K.P. Jaikiran, Director of the FLAIR Project, from Kerala State University, India
10 mins	Presentation: Working with collaborative partners – review of the PICASA and FLAIR projects and their impact on our work at Roehampton
20 mins	World Café session on "Opportunities and possibilities in 2016-18", to include these 8 topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Roehampton's CPD activity pack "Working with International Collaborative Partners"</li> <li>• Learning from each other</li> <li>• Contributions to the curriculum review process</li> <li>• Thinking about institutional policy and strategy</li> <li>• Stakeholders activity</li> <li>• Virtual internationalisation</li> <li>• Formal and less formal collaborations</li> <li>• Benefits for the academic development team</li> </ul>
10 minutes	Q and A

## References

Adams, J; Gurney, K. & Marshall, S. (2007) *Patterns of international collaboration for the UK and leading partners*. UK Office of Science and Innovation, at: <http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Education/documents/2007/07/13/OSICollaborationSummaryRepo.pdf>

Baskerville, S. (2013) *A guide to UK higher education and partnerships for overseas universities*. UK Higher Education Unit

Middlemas, B. & Peat, J. (2015) *"Virtual internationalisation" and the undergraduate curriculum in UK and overseas universities*. Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice, November 2015

Willis, I. & Strivens, J. (2015) *Academic developers and international collaborations: the importance of personal abilities and aptitudes*. International Journal for Academic Development, Vol 20, No 4, pp 333-344

### **Roehampton's Department of Learning and Teaching - collaborative partnerships:**

**E-TALEB** (2016-2019) *Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Learning in Lebanese Universities*, Erasmus + Project, <http://www.etaleb.org/home>

**FLAIR** (2013-2017) *Fostering Linkages in Academic Innovation and Research*. Government of Kerala, India, at: <http://www.flairkerala.org/>

**HEART** (2011-2014) *Higher Education Action for Human Rights Teaching*, EU Tempus Project, at: <http://www.humanrightsteaching.org/>

**PICASA** (2013-2016) *Promotion of Internationalisation through Cultural and Structural Adaptations*, EU Tempus Project, at: <http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/Services/Learning-and-Teaching/Research/PICASA/>