



>>> If an NGO/association is your IHES partner

#IHES guidelines

1 DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS!

- Get familiar with each other's way of working
- Get familiar with civil society needs and goals

A common hurdle for civil society organisations when engaging with universities is the seemingly low awareness of the ways of working from both sides. To avoid creating wrong expectations, it would be crucial for HE institutions to establish clear communication/engagement channels so that both side can get familiar with each other's way of working and move forward based on realistic expectations. Getting to know each other includes learning about each other's structures (i.e. decision making process), capacities (budget, time, human resources). It is important for HE institutions to know first-hand the needs, goals and interests of civil society organisations as to ensure the effectiveness of IHES activities.

2 IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE!

- Identify key people working in civil society for the implementation of IHES activities
- Establish (long-term) relationships with civil society representatives

Identifying key people working in civil society organisations can facilitate the implementation of IHES activities. In many cases, civil society organisations consider that HE institutions do not use the appropriate channels to meet them. For example, they might reach out to schools to involve students and do not reach out to student representative organisations. Identifying these people outside of the formal education system will allow better engagement in IHES activities by different stakeholders including the ones harder to reach since many times they have more interactions with civil society organisations than with the formal education system. Another important aspect in this dimension is to establish long-term relationships with CSOs and avoid one-off collaborations with might lead to the perceptions of including CSO as inclusion tokens in IHES activities.



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3 COOPERATION, NO COMPETITION

- Don't reinvent the wheel, get familiar with what civil society is already doing
- Explores ways of cooperating to develop them into IHES activities if suitable

Given the sizable differences in budget and human resources, HE institutions have an important advantage over civil society organisations. It is therefore important, to cooperate instead of compete for resources when it comes to developing and implementing IHES activities. This approach is beneficial not only to prevent hindering the work of CSOs but to avoid reinventing the wheel when it comes to developing new IHES projects. For this approach to be successful, it is necessary for HE institutions to become familiar with what civil society is already doing and identifying how they could cooperate side by side in scaling up and making these activities more sustainable and more impactful, making sure the ownership of the IHES activities is shared among all actors.

4 RECOGNITION, BEYOND ACADEMIC EXPERTISE

- Recognise the value of the expertise and the work coming from civil society organisations
- Make use of this expertise to improve IHES activities
- Include civil society experts in all phases of developing IHES strategies and activities

Taking into account the previous dimensions means that CSOs are first and foremost given proper recognition for their work and their expertise, which although it might differ from academic expertise, it is quite a valuable asset in education and training systems. The benefits of working together with CSOs as partners go beyond learning from the activities they are implementing but also from the expertise of their representatives. Meaningfully involving them in the development of IHES activities but also beyond in IHES strategies will ensure HE institutions are effectively addressing the real needs of society at large.