



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Education and Culture

NB! This web-version includes only the main information from the application and is not the full version.

eLearning Programme

GRANT APPLICATION

This form is for use by all bodies wishing to obtain financial support under the Call for proposals
: *eLearning Call for Proposals DG EAC/23/05*

oooOooo

This proposal presents a project addressing **ONE** of the following subjects (indicate which):

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Digital literacy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Virtual campuses | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Transversal actions | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Project acronym: VIRCLASS

Grant applications must be drawn up in one of the official EU languages, using this form (please use one single language throughout the whole application). Please note that only typed applications will be considered.

Applications must be sent by the deadline of 4th July 2005, as follows:

- By **post**, date as indicated by the postmark, to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate General for Education and Culture
"eLearning - Call for proposals DG EAC/23/05" for Unit B1
Attn. Mr Sergio Corti
Office B-7 5/42
B- 1049 Brussels

Proposed project summary (to be used for publishing)

Project acronym: VIRCLASS

Objectives: The primary aims of the VIRCLASS project are to develop and disseminate effective strategies that make e-learning in social work a mainstream tool for teaching and learning in an international context, enabling it to be included as part of the social work programmes in HE on different levels. The objectives we will focus on are:

- Developing a model for a didactical approach to international comparative social work education by the use of a virtual “book” as part of the learning materials
- Developing a strategy for future administration and financial foundation of this educational programme in cooperation with partner institutions
- Managing the Virtual Classroom with the new “tools” for the Learning Environment
- Disseminating the strategies and Virtual Campus facilities to HEI social work communities in Europe

The strategies will include the possibility of administrating the courses as blended or e-learning courses. The development of a didactical approach involves making the content and learning objects available to social work programmes on different educational levels, and sorting out and developing a model for how to manage the new Learning Environment in any VLE system.

Approach: The good practice that has already been set out after running the international virtual classroom for social work for one year, will be the starting point for developing strategies for administration and didactical approaches for teaching social work in an international perspective on a virtual campus.

Before the VIRCLASS project started, ICT was not included in international educational cooperation in the field of social work. By connecting our comparative courses to the Bologna standards for ECTS and quality assuring the educational programme, we want to monitor Best Practice and consolidate the importance of investigating and making agreements on administrative procedures for the management of international virtual campuses.

Co operating with the larger European Social Work Thematic Network (EUSW-TN), the possibilities for dissemination beyond partner institutions to a broad HEI society for social work education, the professional field and NGOs are increased, and our project opens new possibilities for life long learning, which is important in societies with rapid social changes in living conditions. Our approach to dissemination will include presentations at international conferences, writing articles for journals and book chapters, and ongoing presentations at our website: <http://home.hib.no/ahs/virclass>. By developing administrative and didactical approaches to a well functioning Virtual Campus for Comparative Social Work Education in Europe, we will make a virtual learning environment that gives social work students and professional social workers from all over Europe the opportunity to implement internationalisation from home and to cooperate both synchronously and asynchronously with students and teachers in other European countries.

Target groups: Target groups for our project are social work students on all levels of HE in Europe as well as teachers and administrators of social work education, professional social workers and the field of social work service producer(providers)s interested in a comparative perspective on social work in Europe.

Expected results: The expected results are:

- The deployment of an administrative and financial model for management of an international virtual campus for social work students in HEI in Europe.
- The deployment of a model for a didactical approach to Social Work Education in a Virtual Classroom for use by all HEI in Europe.
- The deployment of virtual European mobility through extended flexibility in the administration of a trans-national virtual campus, and by making virtual material for comparative social work studies accessible in order to increase the digital literacy of students and teachers of e-learning courses.

Co-ordinating organisation:

Bergen University College
Haugeveien 28
5005 Bergen
Norway

<http://www.hib.no>

Contact details:

Project coordinator: Assistant professor Anne Karin Larsen
Anne.larsen@hib.no
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Co-beneficiary organisations:

University of Parma, (IT)
University of Complutense, Madrid (ES)
Hoegschoole INHOLLAND, Haarlem (NL)
City of Bergen, Department of Health and Districts (NO)
University of Applied Science Vorarlberg (AT)
School of Health Sciences, Jønkøping (SE)
University of Wales, Swansea (UK)
Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas (LT)
Miquel Torga University College (PO)
University of Warmia and Mazury, Olsztyn (PL)

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO QUESTION 10 OF THE GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Detailed project description

A. Objectives, activities envisaged, results and outputs anticipated

A.1 The overall objective of this application is to make The **Virtual Classroom** for Social Work in Europe (VIRCLASS) into a Virtual Campus with a complete and effective Managed Learning Environment (**MLE**) for comparative social work education in Europe. (For information about the work already done by the VIRCLASS project please go to E.) The activities during the project period 2006-07 will be connected to the objectives presented under A.2.

During the process towards an effective MLE system, our activities will focus on:

- Making an overview of administrative routines and the cultural understanding of administrative aspects relating to students in order to make a common model for the administration of VIRCLASS
- Calculating administrative costs and the running of the educational programme and agreeing on a financial model
- Examining the themes and content of the modules and creating virtual and visual elements to be collected in a Virtual “Book” that will increase the accessibility of the courses and make them better suited to the internet and motivational to the students.
- Developing a teacher’s manual for the learning materials
- Clarifying the right to use electronic materials in connection with VIRCLASS
- Quality assuring the models and MLE system by running the modules during a new study period
- Disseminating the results of the project by different means and promoting the adoption of the educational programme in HEI curriculum for social work in Europe
- Updating the website <http://home.hib.no/ahs/virclass> for continuous information about the progress of our project. (For more information about dissemination please see D).

A.2 The grounds for the project are as follows:

- The VIRCLASS project has received grants from The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research through **Norway Opening Universities (NOU)** for 2004-05 and contributions and grants from Bergen University College and partner contributions from Vytautas Magnus University, University of Complutense, University of Parma, School of Health and Social Sciences, Jønkøping, University of Wales, Swansea and Diaconia Politechnic, Helsinki, City of Bergen and Parma Community administration.
- VIRCLASS is the first and remains the only e-learning course at the international level in social work education. The digital literacy of both teachers and students of social work education will be increased, an essential benefit to all parts.
- The good work started and described in point E should be continued and solidified.
- To be able to fulfil the activities described in A.1 we need further financial support.

Our main objective for the VIRCLASS project is to: **Develop and disseminate effective strategies for making e-learning in social work education a mainstream tool for teaching and learning in an international context, and an integral part of different levels of the social work programmes in HE.**

To fulfil this main objective, the following aims will be important during the project period:

1. Create a model with a clear strategy for administration and financial management
2. Create a model for a didactical approach using existing learning materials and by making it more adaptable to web- based learning.
3. Quality assure the learning material based on the Bologna standards and Tuning processes, enabling it to be used by other HEI in Europe.

4. Dissemination of the project results and the Virtual Campus to a broad HEI community in Europe.

A.3 Target groups for this proposal are:

- Social work students on different academic levels. BA, MA and Ph.D students will gain an international comparative perspective on social work, increased digital literacy and the opportunity to cooperate with and learn from students in other countries from their home computer.
- Students with special needs due to sight and hearing impairment will benefit from a virtual classroom
- All students will benefit from the flexibility of e-learning materials
- Professional social workers will gain a new perspective on social problems in Europe, which will improve their ability to meet the needs of clients/service users from other part of Europe
- Teachers/professors in social work education in HEI in Europe will increase their knowledge of and skills in didactical approaches to e-learning courses, their knowledge of virtual literacy and possible methods of communication through online conferences and Teachers Exchange.
- Administrative staff will gain knowledge about how to administrate international e-learning courses and virtual campuses
- Education authorities will benefit from the results of the new method of teaching in the field of social work
- Multimedia content providers will benefit from this project by developing competence in how to make visual and creative presentations of the subjects in and aspects of social work education.

A.4 The innovative aspects of this project are first and foremost the fact that e-learning has been introduced as a tool for international social work education in a common Virtual Classroom/Campus and with a common curriculum plan. While other professions have been using ODL as part of their educational programmes, this has not been the case in social work education in most parts of Europe.

The values of this project so far have been the scope and breadth of international cooperation among teachers from different universities. Students who have participated in the courses have expressed the value of getting in contact with students from other nations and acquiring knowledge not only about social work in foreign countries, but also a new perspective about the situation in their own country.

By continuing the development of better administrative strategies and learning/teaching models, we believe that our product will be better grounded and increasingly accessible so that even more students can take part in the future. The e-learning campus will not only be a good supplement to the summer school that is part of our programme, but it will also increase the value and possible ECTS connected to Intensive Programmes (IP) in future.

A.5 Our overall concept of learning is connected to constructivist and socio-cultural knowledge and understanding. The main pedagogical and didactical approaches are task-oriented and problem solving methods of teaching and learning. Focus and emphasis are on a learner-centred curriculum with learning materials and task/assignments structured in a way that activate students in their learning process. This inspires individual work, but more importantly, interaction, discussion and cooperation that cross national borders. Our experience so far indicates a need for learning objects that can elucidate the topics through images, short videos and texts that can trigger discussions among students.

A.6 This project meets the objectives in the eLearning Call for Proposals DG EACxx/05/ in the following ways:

- a) During the courses Comparative Social Work in Europe, social work students, professionals and teachers in social work are increasing their virtual skills by using the e-learning opportunity offered by VIRCLASS. The students involved have expressed positive experiences by being part of an international study situation and learning from intercultural dialogue with other students in Europe. By offering the educational programme to a broad spectre of social work students and

professionals, we see the possibilities for life long learning as an important aspect of a changing Europe.

- b) By strongly focusing on comparative aspects, the students and teachers involved have expressed the importance of, and their positive experience of, increased understanding of the European dimension in education and a broader understanding of social work/social problems in Europe.
- c) By creating models for good administration and a didactical approach to the educational programme, and by following the Bologna intentions regarding the use of ECTS, we provide mechanisms for supporting the development of European, quality products and services. Through our plans for dissemination of the results of this project to other HE in Europe, we intend to exchange and transfer good practice. This will be an important part of fulfilling the aim of more internationalisation and student mobility in Europe.
- d) By creating a virtual “book” (including content in accordance with the curriculum plan and other visual learning objects and tasks/assignments) which makes it possible to use our product as an interactive learning material connected to any VLE system, we intend to increase the quality of our programme and to stimulate the learning process both individually and as a group activity and foster the autonomy of learners.

The deployment strategies intended for this purpose are well described in the intentions expressed under point D below.

B. Partnership composition , contribution and communication

B.1 1. BERGEN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (BUC)

Bergen University College have three faculties: Education, Health and Social Sciences, Engineering including Business Administration. Number of students are 5000. Number of staff are 500. BUC have organized the educational programmes according to the Bologna declaration: Bachelor degrees (three years), Master Degree (2 years). BUC are using the new grading system (A-F) and the new ECTS credit system. Faculty of health and social sciences have 1600 students and 140 staff both administrative and professional. There are 6 BA programmes and several advanced courses.

At the Social work education programme there is 12 fulltime permanent employed assistant professors running the 3 years educational programme in SW and several postgraduate studies. Several of the employees are also involved in research programmes on Poverty and professional competences and professional knowledge in child care and treatment. As leader of the international project VIRCLASS for development of educational programmes by using e-learning technology and methods, the social work education in Bergen has been a forerunner for this special kind of international co operation and student activity among the educational institutions for social work in Europe. (For more information look at: <http://home.hib.no/ahs/virclass>. The use of VLE systems as part of learning support system for residential campus students have been used at BUC for several years. E-learning method is also used as support to part time studies.

Bergen University College is engaged in international collaborations around the world and both staff and students are involved. We cooperate with institutions of higher education in Nordic Countries, most of the European countries, including the new EU-member states, and with institutions in Africa, Oceania, North-America and South-America. the collaboration involves both research, academic exchange and student exchange. In 2003 161 students went abroad for a shorter or longer study period. 86 out of these went for 3 months or more. BUC has 142 agreements on student exchange, most of which are bilateral. The aim of Bergen University College is to develop and assure the quality of it's existing agreements to be able to provide both student and staff with good learning arenas. The department of Social Education and Social work has been an active partner in international co operation in Europe. As partner in the Thematic Network EUSW-TN, Bergen University College, the social work education, has been coordinating the development of a European Educational Programme for social work in Europe, and also represented in the Board of the project. This Educational programme started in January 2005.

The Media Centre of BUC is closely involved in the development of VirClass. The activities of this centre include making web, sound, image and video products, both for internal use and for external clients. Their particular focus is on the new media. The Media Centre produces digital learning and teaching aids for BUC and other institutions. In addition to production of internet-based courses in media and communication. The Media Centre has ten full-time positions in addition to several part-time and temporary (freelance) employees.

The Media Centre is a service institution for Bergen University College, but a significant part of it's activities include work done for outside clients.

The Media Centre has developed several large websites in the last couple of years, especially within the fields of Information- and Cultural mediation. The MediaCentre was one of the first developers of CD-ROM production for educational purposes in Norway. We have developed 15 CD-ROM. Here is a short summary of productions, where members of the creative team have been involved. Except for "Nordic Film Finder", they are all produced in Norwegian. The MediaCentre also administers and teaches a wide range of Distance Learning courses, and offers both undergraduate courses interchangeable with those offered by the universities and tailored courses to suit any organisation. <http://nettstudier.hib.no/>

Contact person and participants from Bergen University College

1a.– Assistant professor **ANNE KARIN LARSEN**. Project leader and coordinator of the VIRCLASS project. 60% position in the project.

Expertise: She is a board member of the EUSW-TN and leader of the "school group" in this thematic network, and is responsible for the development of the summer school programme and self-study modules in this part of the programme.

She initiated the creation of the VIRTUAL CLASSROOM for social work in Europe and has been the leader of the project from the start. This project has received financial support from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research through the Norway Opening University ([NOU](#)).

She is a social worker by profession and holds a master degree in health promotion and prevention. She has special competence in e-learning pedagogy and has organised and led the e-learning courses of the educational programme SOCIAL WORK IN EUROPE, and has taught two of the modules. She is responsible for the VIRCLASS website.

She has also led several other projects in Norway, some of them state funded and interdisciplinary.

She teaches social work theories, methods and professional competences at Bergen University College.

Her research focuses on learning communities and learning in practice. Her research projects are connected to the programme area Practical Pedagogy, part of the HESOF institute (Institute for Health and Social Research, Bergen University College) led by associate professor dr.polit. Monika Nortvedt and under group consultation by professor dr.phil. Arild Raaheim, University of Bergen.

Specific tasks: Project leadership and responsibility for the management of the project and development of models for administrative organisation and didactical approaches to the virtual classroom. To participate in the design and administration of evaluation and research and dissemination and evaluation during the project period.

CV is attached.

1b. Assistant professor **KJELL HENRIKSBO**. Project member and responsible for the poverty theme in module 2 and participant in the development of a model for the organisation of the e-learning campus. 10% position in the project.

Expertise: He has participated as partner in the project from the very beginning and has taken an active part in the development of the educational programme. He has been an e-learning teacher in one of the themes of module 2, and is very familiar with the use of VLE in educational programmes.

He is a social worker by profession and has a master degree in administration and organisation theory. His particular field of professional interest is community work and community organisation. He is participating in the development of a master degree in community work and social marginalisation at Bergen University College together with professor dr. philos Kjell Underlid of Bergen University College, a researcher on poverty and labour problems and professional leader of the master programme in community work and social marginalisation. This master programme will

include one of the themes from the second module of the educational programme in comparative social work in Europe (e-learning).

Kjell Henriksbø is also an associated member of the Quality Assurance Board for Study Programmes at BUC.

Specific tasks: To participate in the development of the didactical approach and the poverty theme in the educational programme as well as the development of an organisational model for the e-learning campus.

CV is attached.

1c. **Media Centre.** Project supervisor **MORTEN FAHLVIK.** Project member and joint responsibility for the development of the didactical approach and virtual objects. 30% position in the project

Expertise: He is employed at the BUC Media Centre and has experience of multimedia productions. He is administrator, adviser and teacher in many educational programmes using e-learning and video conferences at BUC. He has experience and knowledge of the use of several VLE systems and is currently project coordinator for a research project on the use of weblogs as a VLE in education. He has been involved in the VirClass project as a supervisor and expert in relation to the didactical approach and e-learning pedagogy.

Specific tasks: To be jointly responsible for the pedagogical and didactical approach to e-learning. Supervisor for the e-learning teachers on the virtual campus. He will take part in the development of virtual learning objects and materials.

CV is attached.

1d. **HESOF,** assistant professor / research fellow **GRETE OLINE HOLE.** Project member and participant in the development of the research and dissemination programme, 20% position.

Expertise: She has been administrator, adviser and teacher in many different furthering education and post graduate programmes using e-learning and video conferencing at BUC. She has knowledge of the use of several VLE systems and is currently a research fellow at BUC focusing on ICT in teaching and learning in the health and social work professions.

She is a member of the research team connected to the “TRANSFORM project: The transformation of productive learning processes in technology enhanced learning environment” at UiB and UiO. The leader of this project is a member of “Kaleidoscope”, a European Union Network of Excellence devoted to digital learning. Through TRANSFORM, she has taken part in many workshops, symposia and seminars. She is also a member of the e-learning group of NVU ([the Norwegian Networked University, a professional collaboration for flexible learning](#)).

Specific tasks: To be jointly responsible for the pedagogical and didactical approach to e-learning. Together with the project leader, is responsible for evaluation and research during the project period. To disseminate the findings through reports, articles and oral presentations at various events.

CV is attached.

1e. Office manager OLAV HAUKEN, responsible for economy administration of the project and development of the administrative model for e-learning campus. 10% position

Expertise: Office manager at Bergen University College, Department of health and social sciences. Educated at The Norwegian administration and business school of Bergen. Responsible for economy (budgets and economic reports) at the department.

Specific tasks: Responsible for budgets and economic reports in the VirClass project.

Readinglist VirClass see point E.

2 .UNIVERSITY OF PARMA

10 Faculties (Agricultural Sciences, Architecture, Economics, Engineering, Humanities, Law, Pharmacy, Medicine and Surgery, Sciences, Veterinary Medicine); 31.000 students; 1.000 teaching staff; 1.000 administrative staff.

Today in Parma, according with the University Reform, there are: a Three-year Degree Course in “Sciences of Social Work” for 45 students each year with compulsory attendance for both theoretical lesson and practice placements since the academic year 2000-2001; a two-year

second level degree in “Planning and Management of Social Services” offered to 150 students is ready to start after receiving the approval by the ministry of higher education. The profession received a formal legitimate status, through judicial recognition of the title (1987) and the constitution of a proper professional register (1993). The Register is split into two different levels according to the different types of degree. The graduated Social worker, must pass a state exam to be allowed to practice the profession. From 1972 until the end of 2001, 820 students have gained the diploma in social work and, after the introduction of the university national reform, 35 students reached the first-level degree.

Co-ordinating TEMPUS JEP 10435/98; Co-ordinating Thematic Network MEDNET II 213869; 200 international partnerships; International MA in Environmental Engineering with Fachhochschule Mittweida (DE) and Zhitomir ZIET (UKR); International MA in Library Science with University of Northumbria; Our institution joined the Socrates/Erasmus Programme in 1990, together with different partners in Europe, and started students and teachers exchange activities, intensive courses. Coordinator of the EUSW-TN with 95 partner institutions

Contact person from University of Parma, Italy.

Head of the Office for International and EU Relations, **ALESSANDRO BERNAZZOLI**.

Responsible for the development of an administrative model for virtual classrooms/campuses. 10% position

Expertise: He is a highly competent organiser and administrator of international courses, both as a former employee at the Socrates office and currently as head of the new international office and EU relations at Parma University. He has been a partner in the VIRCLASS project for the past two years and has administrative responsibility for the EUSW-TN project.

Specific tasks: To participate in the work towards the construction of an administrative and financial model for the virtual classroom.

CV is attached.

3. UNIVERSITY OF MADRID COMPLUTENSE

Year of foundation:1996; Students:4384; Teachers working at the institution:130;Administrative staff:56 Complutense University belongs at the main networks and programmes all over the world, and the School of Social Work has been participating in -Alfa Programmes. -A.E.C.I (Agenda Espanola de Cooperacion Intemacional). -Leonardo Da Vinci Programmes. -A Socrates' Consortium conducted by Manchester Metropolitan University- S/E Programmes- IP about Ederiay People and IP about Globalisation and Social Work. At this moment we have more than forty Pre-Agreement Inside QMS we send 'out' more than 40 students every course, and receive,'in', around twenty five students.

Contact person . University of Complutense, Madrid.

Associate professor **ANDRES ARIAS ASTRAY**. Project member participating in the development of new didactical approaches to and digitalisation of learning material. 10% position in the project.

Expertise: He has been responsible for the development of one of the themes of our programme and an e-learning teacher in the same area in module 2. He has knowledge of several VLE systems and will be an important partner not only in the digitalisation of learning materials, but also in the development of new didactical approaches in our programme.

Specific tasks: Responsible for digitalisation of learning materials in the programme and the development of new thematic areas in the virtual classroom programme.

CV is attached.

4. INHOLLAND UNIVERSITY

In 2002 INHOLLAND University was founded after a merger of 4 universities. Haarlem was one of the partners. Since 1989 INHOLLAND University Haarlem exchanges students and staff from Economics, Education, Health, Social Work and Technology. INHOLLAND University Haarlem now has over 85 partners, mostly in Europe. The School of Social Work Haarlem started with student and staff exchange in 2001/2002 (5-8 per year) and has a network of 6 European partners. In 2002 we developed an international module 'International Human Resources Management', a joint activity with 2 other European partners, using videoconferencing, one of them Bergen

University College. We aim to expand our exchanges and are in search of new partners to do so. With these partners we also want to internationalise our curriculum further, especially in the field of e-learning.

Contact person from INHOLLAND UNIVERSITY, HAARLEM,

Mr. **REMMELT VEENKAMP**, staff member of the School of Social Work.

Participant in the development of methods for running and administrating e-learning courses. 10% position in the project.

Expertise: This university is a new partner in the VIRCLASS project, but Bergen University College has cooperated with INHOLLAND for several years in the video conferencing and teaching project. Their special knowledge of the use of online video conferencing is of interest to this project, as we will be developing a model for didactical approaches to e-learning.

Specific tasks: To contribute knowledge of and competence in video conferencing and to participate in the development of new elements in the virtual classroom.

CV is attached.

5. CITY OF BERGEN

Contact person Head of section **MAGNE ERVIK.**, participant in dissemination of the project. 10% position in the project.

Expertise:

Magne Ervik is head of section for social services in Department of health and care, City of Bergen. He is educated social worker and has experience from different parts of the municipal organization concerning social and child welfare. He is representing the municipality of Bergen in councils at the Bergen University College and University of Bergen.

City of Bergen has 240.000 inhabitants and in the municipal social and child welfare services there are about 500 skilled social workers. Section for social services is, among other tasks, responsible for developing and implementing learning programmes for employees in the social and child welfare services and making systems for quality development.

Specific tasks: To contribute with dissemination of the project to the field of social work.

6. UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES VORARLBERG

Year of foundation: 1989; Students: 1050; Teaching working: 91; Administrative staff: 62.

University of Applied Sciences Vorarlberg offers an accredited degree program in the field of Social Work. All permanent teaching staff have gained immense practical experience, which they bring into the class-room. The teaching staff can be described as generalists with a strong focus on practical aspects of Social Work. In addition, many practitioners work as external staff, which means that the practical aspect of the teachers is always up to date and there is an excellent contact to the "outside world". One of the strong points of the degree program Social Work is the constant cooperation with Austrian institutions as well as institutions in the neighbouring Germany and Switzerland. University an Austrian forerunner in the field of internationalisation and has established an international network of more than 80 partner universities in nearly 30 countries worldwide. The exchange of both students and teaching staff, common projects within various EU programs as well as the development of joint curricula / joint degrees with partner institutions plays an important role. Nearly 60% of the graduates of Fachhochschule Vorarlberg have gained international experience, either during their study abroad period or during a workplace abroad. A great number of teachers is involved in international projects and joint research activities.

Contact person for FACHHOCHSCHULE VORARLBERG, AUSTRIA.

*Prof DSA **ANSWIN WEISSENBORN.** Project worker. 10% position in the project*

Expertise: Social work professor and member of the Executive Committee of the EASSW (European Association of Schools of Social Work) with many international contacts. She has been co-teacher and evaluator of one of the e-learning courses in module 2 of Social Work in Europe in the VirClass project. Fachhochschule Vorarlberg has an e-learning centre/lab that will be

a resource in the future development of the virtual classroom.

Specific tasks: To contribute knowledge of social work and take part in the development of models for the future administration and management of the virtual classroom.

CV is attached.

Frank Weber. Project worker. 5% position. Researcher at the e-learning lab at the Fachhochschule Vorarlberg.

Expertise: Higher education in and experience of communication design and an interactive media specialist in e-learning design. Initially educated as an English language teacher.

Specific tasks: To contribute knowledge of e-learning design. He will support the content management.

CV is attached.

7. UNIVERSITY OF JÖNKÖPING

Year of foundation:1983; Students:2000; Teachers working at the institution: 150;Administrative staff: 45 The department has lectures, senior lectures and associated professor specialised in a broad range of issue in social work. The University has an international focus including student and teacher mobility, curriculum development, international networking and research cooperation agreements with universities in different part of the world.

Are partner in the VIRCLASS programme.

Contact person from School of health and social sciences, Jönköping

Assistant professor **KLAS-GÖRAN OLSSON**. Project worker participant in the development of a didactical and an administrative model for the VIRCLASS. 10% position in the project

Expertise: His knowledge of European welfare systems and the effects on social work is of importance to this course. He has been responsible for the development of one of the themes of our programme and has taught two of the e-learning modules. He has knowledge of the use of several LMS systems and is project leader for another related programme, Internationalisation from home.

Specific tasks: His specific task will be connected to the development of the model for didactical approaches to e-learning and as teacher in the virtual classroom.

CV is attached

8. UNIVERSITY OF WALES SWANSEA

Year of foundation:1928; Students:10355; Teachers working at the institution:1202; Administrative staff:445.

The Social Work programme at University of Wales Swansea is undergoing a transformation in accordance with national requirements, and will be finishing this year the longstanding 2-year Diploma in Social Work programme, and beginning next year the new 3-year undergraduate degree in social work. The Department of Applied Social Sciences has recently appointed a Professor of Social Work. The programme has experienced staff capable of delivering high quality teaching in the areas of mental health, community care, community development, child care, and criminal justice and well as in the principles, practices, methods and knowledge underpinning social work. The programme will continue to deliver higher degrees in the area of criminal justice and child welfare, and has an active PhD programme. The programme was one of very few programmes to achieve a 5 in the last Research Assessment Exercise, and staff are ever mindful of the need to integrate research into work with students.

Even through recent times of staffing shortages (which are now mostly resolved) the programme has continued to attempt to participate in European activities, both in terms of intensive programmes and the thematic network. We are particular activate in the current Thematic Network in the development of the Summer School and the VIRCLASS e-learning programme being undertaken with a lead from Norway. We continue to encourage students to think about placements abroad, and in the past have had students in Athens, Gothenburg, Florida (USA), and Montreal (Canada).

Contact person from University of Wales, UK,

DR. ROBERT SANDERS. Project member. 10% position in the project related to development of didactical model and dissemination.

Expertise: As partner in the VIRCLASS project for two years, he has demonstrated his expertise in the field of social work and as an e-learning teacher and partner in the educational programme. He has been responsible for the development of one of the themes of the educational programme and has been an e-learning teacher and student evaluator for the courses.

Specific tasks: To continue to develop the courses for digital and e-learning schemes, and to contribute his knowledge of research to the evaluation of the work and creation of a model for administration and didactical approaches to the virtual classroom.

CV is attached

9. VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

The School of Social Work was established in 1992. The School of Social Work develops social work as specific social activity, based on Christian values, which integrates research findings and enables effective interaction between individual and society. Within structure of School of Social Work there are: Department of Social Work, Centre of Social Integration, Centre of Social Welfare Education. The Department of Social Work develop and realises study programs, organises student's field practice, fulfils researches on social issues and also investigates efficiency of implementation of study programs and their suitability for developing social work profession as a new profession in Lithuania. The Centre of Social Welfare Education organises and implements continuous studies improving social workers' professional skills, provides re-qualification programs, develops specialisation programs, consults and informs social work practitioners, educates social work consultants/supervisors. 1992 -1997 by commitment of Lithuanian Caritas, American and Lithuanian Bishop's Conferences in Vytautas Magnus University there was initiated social work as profession and study object in 136 **SOCRATES PROGRAMME** Application form for Full Proposal 223085 - CP -1-2005-1- IT - ERASMUS – TN Lithuania; 2000 School of Social Work was participating as partner preparing studies, which was funded by European Training Foundation "Vocational Education Training against Social Exclusion"; 1998 School of Social Work was participating as experts in project, funded by Leonardo da Vinci, "Social Work Education and Training"; 2001 and 2002 School of Social Work was running international summer school, which was funded by Open society Fund, for PDD students and young teachers from ex- Soviet countries in cooperation with professors from USA, Finland, UK; 2002 - 2003 School of Social Work was participating as partners in project, which was funded by PHARE, "Basic skills for social integration"; 2002 - 2004 School of Social Work was participating as partner in project, funded by FT5, "European Research Centre for Social Work"; 2002 – 2004 as partner in project, which was funded by Erasmus TN, "European Social Work: Commonalities and Differences"; 2003 - 2005 School of Social Work is participating as partners in project, which was funded by Leonardo da Vinci, "Voca Europe"; 2003 School of Social Work is participating as partners in thematic network, which is initiated by Evangelische Fachhochschule Berlin, "European Network for Social Work Training"; 2004 – 2006 School of Social Work is participating as experts in Finnish - Russian "SOSNET" project

Contact person from Vytautas Magnus University

Lecturer JULIJA EIDUKEVICIUTE. Project member participant in the development of the didactical model 10% position in the project.

Expertise: As a partner in this project, she has already been co-teacher of one of the e-learning courses. Her specific knowledge of social work in Eastern European countries is of great importance to the development of administrative and didactical approaches to a virtual classroom that will be available to all European countries. Her special competence and knowledge of poverty and child poverty as a social problem is also of importance to the development of the themes.

Specific tasks: To participate using her knowledge and practical teaching experience as a teacher of students in the virtual classroom.

CV is attached

10. MIQUEL TORGA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, PORTUGAL,

Contact person assistant professor **EDUARDO de MARQUES.** Responsible for the development of artistic and creative elements in the virtual programme, 10% position.

Expertise: He has participated in the creation of the educational programme and has taken part in making use of creative and visual triggers in the e-learning programme. His special interests are in

art and pedagogy, and this special area is of importance to the further development of this project.
Specific tasks: To construct and find visual and video triggers for the courses in the virtual classroom as part of the development of a model for didactical approaches to e-learning and teaching.

11. WARMIA AND MASURIA UNIVERSITY IN OLSZTYN

Year of foundation: 1986; Students: 38000 Teachers working at the institution: 1785; Administrative staff: 800. The Chair of Social Pedagogy at the University of Warmia and Mazury has been engaged in the professional education and training for social pedagogues and social workers since 1993. There are different types of studies for the social professions within the university: diploma studies (master degree course - 5 years of studies) in social pedagogy, pedagogy of care, socio-cultural animation; diploma studies (master degree course - 5 years studies) in social pedagogy, pedagogy of care, socio-cultural animation for working students; diploma in social work (bachelor course – 3 years studies); graduate studies in social work (master degree course - 2 years for graduates of bachelor course); diploma postgraduate studies in welfare and social work management and doctorate studies in pedagogy. The Head of the Chair of Social Pedagogy and other academic teachers have been conducting many research projects related to social phenomena and social work theory and practice: exclusion and inclusion at the time of transition, social support for marginalized people, protection of human rights, multicultural social problems as a challenge for social professions, European dimensions in social work education and others. The Chair of Social Pedagogy as the member of the Polish Association of Schools of Social Work is a member of European Association of Schools of Social Work. Some academic teachers are participating international seminars and conferences dealing to social work and social work education issues in worldwide perspective: of EASSW e.g. in Helsinki in 1999 (Prof. S. Kawula, Dr. E. Kantowicz), in Copenhagen in 2003 (Prof. S. Kawula, Dr. E. Kantowicz, mgr B. Chrostowska); of IASSW e.g. in Montpellier in 2002 (Dr. E. Kantowicz, Mgr. M. Ciczowska); or ECSSPRES Seminars in Belarus in 1997 and Ostrava in 1998 or others e.g. in Magdeburg 2004. The Chair of Social Pedagogy has been the partner institution in Socrates/Erasmus TN - EUSW-Commonalities and Differences since 2002 playing an important part in developing the project Thanks to international cooperation within EUSW TN there have been signed three contracts for students and teachers exchange (with Madrid Complutense University in Spain, Jonkoping Health Sciences University in Sweden and University of Applied Science in Koblenz in Germany). The cooperation has been already started since academic year 2004/2005. There has been also developing one research project dealing with social support for disabled children and families at risk with West England University in Bristol. The University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn has got the accreditation for ECTS and develops platform for international cooperation due to Bologna Declaration.

Contact person from University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland.

Professor **EWA KANTOWICZ**. Responsible for the comparative research aspects of the educational programme. 10% position in the project.

Expertise: This university has not been a direct partner in the VIRCLASS project, but one of the teachers has taken part in the assessment and development of one of the themes. In this way, the university has some experience of the e-learning programme. One of the main articles on comparative research in our programme has been written by Prof Ewa Kantowicz, and we think it is important that she and her colleagues continue to take part in the programme as direct partners.

Specific tasks: To contribute knowledge of comparative studies in the development of a model for didactical approaches to e-learning and teaching. To participate in the running of the educational programme.

B.2 Communication and co operation among partners.

The working language for this project will be English.

Communication among partner institutions and representatives will be by e-mail and by using the VLE system “It’s:learning” as a platform for online conferences, asynchronous communication, cooperation and discussions. This method of communication will be important for maintaining communication during the interim between working group meetings and network meetings.

WG1 (see definition below) will have two meetings during spring 2006. WG2 will have four group meetings during 2006. WG 3 will assign one research fellow to participate in the other group meetings, and she will collect data during this process.

The group meetings will be important for maintaining progress and deadlines for the work and for discussing elements that are difficult to sort out through written communication only. The partnership agreement that is attached to this application will be the official agreement regarding participation and workload.

The first network meeting in January 2006 will state more specific agreements regarding the division of the work and how to resolve any conflicts that arise between partners. Contracts for management responsibility for the different objectives will be made at the very start of the project period. Two other network meetings will be held during 2007.

The board will meet twice a year during the project period.

The website for this project, <http://home.hib.no/ahs/virclass>, will be an important source of information about the progress of the project, not only for partner institutions, but also for the rest of HEI and others interested in e-learning development. The working groups will provide materials for the website and the Media Centre at BUC will be responsible for updating the website.

B.3 Other institutions which will participate in the project without receiving support from the eLearning grant

- Name : Bergen University, Department for Education and Health Promotion
- Legal status : University
- Type of body : EDU.4
- Department : Faculty of psychology
- Address : Christiesgt.13
- Town : Bergen Post code: 5015
- Region : Hordaland
- Country : Norway
- Contact person : Surname: Raaheim First Name: Arild
- Function : professor dr. philos
- Telephone : (+47) 55582555 Fax
- E-mail : arild.raaheim@psyf.uib.no
: CV is attached

Members of the EUSW-TN (223085-CP-1-2005-1-IT-ERASMUS-TN) will be well informed about the projects and its results, and will have the opportunity to send students to the VIRCLASS educational programme for Social Work in Europe. Members of the network might also contribute as assessor for students in the educational programme Social Work in Europe.

Professional staff from the research centre at Bergen University College that will be in connection with the project:

- Name : BUC, Institute for Health and Social Research
- Legal status : University College
- Type of body : EDU.4
- Department : HESOF
- Address : Haugeveien 28
- Town : Bergen Post code: 5005
- Region : Hordaland
- Country : Norway
- Contact person : Surname: Nordtvedt First Name: Monika
- Function : Associated professor dr. scient Nursing

- Telephone : (+47) 55585556 Fax +47 55 90 00 11
- E-mail : monica.nortvedt@hib.no
: CV is attached Yes

Name : BUC, Institute for Health and Social Research
- Legal status : University College
- Type of body : EDU.4
- Department : HESOF
- Address : Haugeveien 28
- Town : Bergen Post code: 5005
- Region : Hordaland
- Country : Norway
- Contact person : Surname: Underlid First Name: Kjell
- Function : Professor dr. philos
- Telephone : (+47) 55587862 Fax +47 55 90 00 11
- E-mail : kjell.underlid@hib.no
: CV is attached Yes

C. Project approach and organisation

C.1 The methods which will be used and developed.

Bergen University College will be responsible for administrating and coordinating the project. The coordinating institution will initiate the work carried out by partner institutions, and three working groups will be established and assigned responsibility for activities in connection with the development of the objectives explained in this application. Leaders of the working groups will serve as representatives on the executive board of the project, which will be chaired by the project coordinator.

The project will start with a four-day conference, the two first days of which will be a presentation of the work done during the first period of the project. The two final days will be reserved for the organisation of internal procedures for the network. This includes committing partners to specific outputs and participation in working groups and the board.

After this, the planned outputs will primarily be advanced and actualised within the working groups (as described in the structure below), each group under the leadership of a working group leader. The leader will present the work of the group to the board.

The project will build on partner participation and utilise inclusive philosophies in relation to all methods. The methods will seek to address issues of discrimination and differential access. It is acknowledged that some partner organisations may need particular encouragement and support to fully participate in the activities. Issues of gender, culture, sexuality, disability and age will be in the foreground of all planning methods.

Different kinds of research methods will be used to gather the data necessary for conducting research. Communication among partners will take place using the different means described above.

This project will use conferences/network meetings to disseminate earlier results, plan new activities and make commitments for the project. Network meetings for all partners will take place three times during the project period and will focus on the development and progression of activities in connection with the objectives of the project and information and training in new elements of e-learning. During these network meetings there will also be time for shorter working group meetings.

Working group meetings are important tools for maintaining progress in the project. Working

group meetings will take place from three to four times each year.

The board will plan the network meeting and monitor the project. There will be one board meeting each semester (spring and autumn). The board will also have synchronic online conferences in the interim between meetings.

Three working groups (WG) will be established.

- WG1: Development of the administrative model (the administrative group) (7 persons)
- WG2: Didactical approaches to the virtual classroom (the didactical group) (12 persons)
- WG3: Evaluation and dissemination (the research group) (6 persons)

Some members of working groups will overlap and participants in WG2 will divide into subgroups during the meetings in order to concentrate on different parts of the creation of didactical models. WG3 members will construct evaluation tools during the project and work on the subjects to be disseminated.

WG 1 will have three meetings 2006 and two meetings in 2007.

WG 2 will have four meetings in 2006 and two meetings in 2007.

WG 3 will have four meetings in 2006 and three meetings in 2007.

There will be a total of 16 persons involved in the project.

- C.2 Provide a detailed work plan, preferably in the form of the table provided below, giving dates, activities and expected results and outputs.
- a) Divide the project into relevant **stages or work packages** which you envisage in order to achieve the project results and outputs identified.
 - b) Provide an **overall work plan** using the table format showing within each stage described in point C.2 a), what **activities** the partnership will undertake, which **partner(s)** will be responsible for each stage, **how many** persons (person / days or person / months) each activity will require and the duration in months of these activities.
 - c) Please include a Gantt chart of your project.

D. Evaluation and dissemination (suggested length: 2 pages)

D.1 Measures to monitor and evaluate the project.

There are multiple main objectives for the VIRCLASS project, and we need to take account of all the sub-systems of the Managed Learning Environment (MLE) described in [JISC Manage the future with MLEs](#) when we monitor and evaluate the results. Due to the nature of the research questions, this will require both qualitative and quantitative methodology. Our aim is to find some guidelines for Best Practice, and to share these with other HEI in the field of social work.

The overall guiding research question is:

To what extent does VirClass promote learning and cooperation in the field of social work education?

- Is Virclass a tool which encourages the necessary organizational and cultural changes to enhance e-learning?
- Will the development of a new administrative and economic model be reflected in the management of the educational programs in 2006/07?
- Will the model for a didactical approach and the adherence to a virtual “book” affect the learning environment in VirClass?

Evaluation of the way in which e-learning promotes international activity and cooperation and increases language abilities are essential to the promotion of digital literacy for both students and teachers.

To have students from different academic levels participating in the same course can be a big challenge. It gives an opportunity to compare the commonalities and differences not only among the situations in different countries, but it also gives us an idea of whether there is a need for more differentiation in the curriculum plan.

In this way, our project opens several avenues for research which are unique in social work education. Another research question will be:

- What commonalities and differences can be seen in students following the same curriculum plan but studying on different levels; i.e. as bachelor students, master students, PhD candidates and professional social workers?

As follow-up to the [Bologna process](#), it is of interest to see in what way:

- Does the VirClass support effective integration of digitally delivered content in SW education and training in the students' learning process?
- Do the MLEs, including Virclass, facilitate the intended learner-centred activities?
- Do the MLEs promote easy and efficient administrative support for teachers and students in all participating institutions?

To answer these questions, the experiences of administrators, teachers/academic staff and students during the project period will be explored:

We wish to acquire knowledge about:

- the administrative model,
- our didactical and pedagogical approaches,
- the content (learning materials) used and
- the workload for administrative staff, teachers and students.

This will be done by collecting 'hard' data that reflect the feasibility of the project, how the work is carried out and what the impacts of the project are, together with the participants' own accounts describing their perceived experience in the field of e-learning.

Research questions for both academic and administrative staff will be related to: the skills required, the amount of time used compared to other teaching methods/programmes, the support needed to facilitate virtual learning, administration of input, fees, assessments and marks and the understanding of workload in connection with ECTS, the flexibility of the study situation and the effect on the international learning situation through cooperation and interaction on the virtual campus.

Another question of interest will clarify whether there have been any problems due to technological obstacles, consequences of these and how the difficulties have been solved, in order to gain in-depth knowledge for the recommendation of best practice.

Data will be collected from all participants involved in specific parts of the project, both as process evaluations during the project period and final evaluations after finishing the work on the specific tasks involved in the project. Data will be analysed in accordance with the objectives and research questions.

D.2 The means by which the project intends to test and evaluate its results and outputs.

Due to the fact that VIRCLASS has already run international e-learning courses in social work for a year, many questionnaires have been developed and used for collecting data from the project members, both teachers and students, relating to teaching and learning outcomes. Our previous administrative experience of developing and running e-learning courses in an international virtual classroom is useful in refining and developing an administrative model that can secure a future for the virtual campus. The experience gained will give us the opportunity to compare the findings of the first project period with the results of the second, extended period. However, the main focus will be on the findings from this new period.

Enhanced by sociocultural learning theory, the research and evaluation will be based on the case study method. Using an ethnographic approach, many kinds of data will be collected to attain both an overview of cooperation and collaboration in the MLE and in-depth understanding of the participants' experience of being a member of VirClass. Thus, we will collect data about the background variables of the participants (students and teachers), previous experience of ICT and attitudes towards teaching and learning, as well as data on participation in the VLE: the number of students enrolled in the course/ students completing each started module, the number of people logged on the VLE during a certain period of time etc. We will administer surveys administered through the VLE system and open-ended questionnaires to students and staff. When monitoring behaviour using this kind of "surveillance", all ethical issues will have to be considered, and informed consent from all participants must be obtained before the research can be undertaken.

D.3 Describe the arrangements planned for **publication and dissemination** of results and experiences of the project. In particular, describe how the partners will contribute to the process of disseminating results. Specify dissemination networks that could make the materials easier to access and obtain for the target group(s) across Europe.

Our plan for the publication and dissemination of the results is to write articles for publication focusing on the four main objectives of this project:

- Experience of the administration of an international virtual campus in social work education.
- New didactical approaches to social work education by using e-learning as a method for international communication and learning.
- Different views on control and learning in relation to routines for the administration of assessments in international courses.
- Reflection on learning by using Virtual Learning Management systems in the running of international courses in social work.

Our partners will participate in the writing of articles for publication in professional journals, and abstracts for book chapters have already been approved for a planned book on social work education in Europe (edited by the EUSW-TN project).

Our partners will also participate in the dissemination of the results of our project at international conferences and through partnership in the Thematic Network European Social Work – commonalities and differences (EUSW-TN) and the new network, European Platform for Worldwide Social Work, which consists of 95 partner institutions (223085-CP-1-2005-1-IT-ERASMUS-TN).

The project leader will disseminate the results from the first two years of the VIRCLASS project at conferences during the 21st Nordic Conference for Schools of Social Work (NSHK) in August 2005 in Copenhagen. Other international conferences where this project will be disseminated by project partners will include the 33rd congress of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) in August 2006 in Chile, and the next conference of the European Association of Schools of Social Work (EASSW) in Parma in August 2007.

The project will also disseminate the results at national and international workshops, conferences and symposia focusing on e-learning, Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL), e-learning standards/learning objects etc. (such as the [EDEN conferences](#)).

E. Other information

In point A above, new activities have been presented. The activities and objectives in this application are based on the last two years of work. During that period the following activities have been carried out in cooperation with eight partner institutions from seven European countries:

- Development of a common curriculum plan for comparative social work in Europe in three modules of 5 + 10+10 ECTS (Module 1+2 =e-learning modules, M3=self-study and summer school), quality approved by Bergen University College and adapted by partner institutions
- The decision to use “It’s:learning” as the VLE-system for VIRCLASS
- Courses for teachers on management of the platform and the pedagogical approach for teaching using e-learning
- Creation of learning (teaching) materials, content and objects for the six courses in the VLE.
- Student administration by Bergen University College and University of Parma of more than 100 students from 22 different countries
- Running of six e-learning courses with students from all over Europe and teachers from partner institutions
- Administration of exams and assessments by teachers from different parts of Europe using the ECTS standards

- Research and evaluation of the learning process and the experience of being student and teacher in a Virtual Classroom.

The VIRCLASS project started as a result of the EUSW-TN (European Social Work Thematic Network) (104315-CP-3-2004-1-IT –Erasmus-TN) that was funded by the Socrates programme for 2002-04. One of the objectives of the EUSW-TN was to create a summer school for social work students in Europe. During the process of developing the summer school the idea came about to create an e-learning part and thus increase the number of ECTSs that it is possible to receive. To create a VIRTUAL CLASSROOM for social work in Europe was a new and fascinating idea. There was little experience of e-learning in the field of social work and many partners were interested in taking part in the development of this new learning arena. The VIRCLASS project was established outside the EUSW-TN, but co operated due to the integration of the curriculum plan developed for e-learning and the summer school. Students who started on the virtual campus could advance to module 3, the residential campus, at the end of the programme (summer school 2005 in Parma).

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Websites (all viewed 050628)

The European programme for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe (2004-2006); [eLearning Programme](#).
European Distance and E-learning Network: [EDEN](#)
The Association for Learning Technology, [ALT](#)
The Joint Information Systems Committee; [JISC](#)
British Education and Communication and Technology Agency; [BECTA](#)

Reports, Workshops, Whitepaper (all viewed 050628)

PLS Rambøl Management mars 2004: Virtual Models of European Universities; [Final report](#);
Consultant Workshop (2004.11.04): Promoting Digital literacy: [Report](#)

Consultant Workshop (2004.11.27/28) Access Rights for eLearning Content & Creating, sharing and reusing eLearning Content. [Report](#)
Consultant Workshop (2004.11.23): The 'e' for our campuses- virtual campuses. Organisational Changes and Economic Models. [Report](#)
Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality. [Communication](#) (2001.11.21)
[Bologna Process](#): (fulfilling The Bologna Declaration on the European Higher Education)
BECTA Research [Overview](#), 2005
[Managing the future with MLE](#)