An inspiring autumn experience
Connecting and working towards creating smart, resilient and happy communities
What is the “Smart, resilient and happy communities” programme?

- A unique, alternative international experience during Fall 2020 for engaged learners with a vision to make a change in their communities
- Possibility to work on a real-life challenge and co-develop solutions
- Work on a challenge under the thematic of UN SDG 11 on resilient communities
- A flexible programme offering a variety of educational micro-modules and skill-development workshops to use as tools for the challenge
- Access to inspirational speakers, top academics, researchers and professionals from the University of Twente (UT) and other partner universities
- Engaging, connecting and collaborating with other learners across Europe and the world as well as public stakeholders
- For learners who want to work on their personal development aside their regular studies

*We provide the tools, learners take the lead in their challenge-based learning journey!*
Why this is an experience you cannot miss out

Through this programme we aim to
- engage learners and take them “outside” of their regular classroom and “inside” the real world, with real challenges and projects offered by public and private stakeholders
- address the needs of students to interact with peers and other learners despite the physical mobility restrictions
- create an unconventional learning environment not bound by physical location and other constraints, with flexible education formats, extracurricular virtual activities and other informal formats of education
- support students, sustain their wellbeing and allow them to become part of solutions and change by connecting to discuss and dive into important topics that have an impact on our communities, locally and globally
What should learners expect

The “Smart, resilient and happy communities” programme

- offers the opportunity to bring people from different locations together with the aim of co-creating solutions to existing problems and challenges
- group work in Virtual Teams on a pre-defined real-life challenge on the topic of resilient communities and smart cities
- equips learners with tools:
  - a combination of online lectures, masterclasses, podcasts, workshops and webinars on topics related to social leadership, technology and society, smart cities, resilient communities and cities
  - skills development workshops and labs
  - variety of extracurricular activities to stimulate intercultural skills and knowledge of other cultures
- gives the opportunity students to give their input and have influence over an issue or challenge
Component A: Virtual Teams

The virtual teams are the main component of the programme and are the teams formed to discuss and solve the challenge (case). In such a team, students will ideally be working on a challenge together with 4 to 6 other students. A variety of study and cultural backgrounds will be represented in your group. Due to the possible geographical distances and corona virus measures the teams will be working together in a digital environment, hence the use of the word ‘virtual’. A coach will be assigned per team in order to provide assistance and guidance when needed, as well as facilitate communication with the challenge provider.

Activity schedule and workload
Student teams are required to spend at least 4 hours a week working on their challenge. The Teams will be flexible to plan their meeting time, but they will also have some structured activities taking place during weekdays in the afternoons (on a set time).
Component B: Thematic Weekends

In order to make sure students have enough background information to work on their challenge, topics related to resilient societies will be covered during the so-called thematic weekends.

In total there are five thematic weekends, all covering a different theme related to resilient communities for healthy living and care communities. For example, themes such as smart cities and smart communities
- building inclusive communities for promoting health and wellbeing;
- understanding and tackling challenges;
- discussing ethics and technology within the society will be covered.

Activity schedule and workload
Each thematic weekend includes lectures, workshops or masterclasses of 6 hours in total (3 hours on a Saturday and 3 hours on a Sunday)
The Skills Labs are there to ensure students develop the (soft) skills or 21st-century skills required to solve the (and a) challenge. Such Skills Labs include but are not limited to:

- skills related to the challenge-based learning methodology;
- problem solving;
- team working;
- design methodology;
- presentation and pitching;
- societal leadership;
- cross-cultural and intercultural competences.

Activity schedule and workload
The Skills Labs will take place during a normal working week, no more than 45 minutes.
Component D: Cultural Activities

Cultural activities are aimed to help students come to a greater understanding of other cultures and situations in other regions than your own, this course also facilitates several cultural activities. Activities will include:

- virtual city tours;
- language cafes;
- intercultural icebreakers;
- podcasts;
- social gatherings;
- game nights.

Activity schedule and workload
These activities may take place during the normal working week in afternoons and/or some weekends. Attendance at these activities is not obligatory but is highly encouraged.
A sneak peek to the schedule*

October 2020

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* The schedule is an example and an indication to the activities that will be offered. The exact schedule will be communicated upon successful admission.
Programme details

Duration and schedule
- 1 October- 20 December 2020 (a total of 12 weeks)
- Assessment moment: 12-14 January 2021
- Scheduled activities take place during weekends and/or afternoons during weekdays (no 9-5 mentality)

Certification & credits
- 5 ECTS (subject for recognition and approval by the respective home universities)
- Certification of participation with details on workload, modules followed and skills and competences acquired

Additional learning & internationalising opportunities
- Participants will also be granted a fee waiver for the CuriousU Summer School in 2021.
Admission & Registration

Requirements
- Focus on Bachelor’s students in their second to last or last year and entry level Master’s students.
- The programme is open to enrolled UT students, students enrolled to ECIU partner universities and various strategic partner universities of the UT.
- Admitted learners from the UT, ECIU University and UT strategic partners will not pay a participation fee.
- External learners may also apply, however admitted external learners are subject to a participation fee of 150 EUR.
- All modules will be offered in English, therefore learners are expected to have a good command of the English language.

Application process
- Learners may apply via our online application form.
- Along with the application form, the below documentation must also be provided:
  - An English language proficiency certificate/diploma with B2 level (CEFR) minimum. IELTS, TOEFL and other similar tests are accepted.
  - A short CV
  - A motivation letter of 500 words max. explaining the reasons for applying to this programme and willingness to participate
- Applications can be submitted until 7 September 2020, 23:59 (CET).

Acceptance
After submission of the application, the Admissions Committee will make a formal acceptance decision and admitted learners will be contacted by email.
For more information and questions about the programme and admission process, please contact us via autumn-challenge@utwente.nl and visit our website www.utwente.nl/en/autumn-challenges.