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Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Leitir Ceanainn

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Project Title: Can telecollaboration revitalise language teaching in the Donegal region?

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Keywords: telecollaboration, second level language learning, revitalisation.

Project Summary:

The government's *Languages Connect Strategy* has prioritised linguistic skills as having a major role to play in Ireland's future prosperity, setting ambitious targets for both second and third level education. In addition to increasing the numbers learning languages, the strategy has also prioritised the role that international mobility plays in motivating and encouraging language learning. Traditionally, however, Ireland's participation in Erasmus Plus mobility programmes has been low and innovative pedagogical practices will be required to promote it. Since it first emerged 20 years ago, telecollaboration has provided authentic communication channels for learners of many languages, enabling them to enhance their linguistic and intercultural skills on virtual platforms. In addition to the intercultural and linguistic skills acquired through virtual exchange, prior studies have also highlighted the role it plays in developing digital skills, as learners navigate around virtual platforms. However, the full potential of these platforms has yet to be realised in the Donegal region. and could be harnessed by introducing virtual exchange to pupils at second level. This proposal seeks to align the Donegal region with the national strategy, by investigating knowledge of and attitudes towards telecollaboration among both teachers and learners in second level schools. The findings of this study will lead to the upskilling of language teachers in the competencies required to engage in virtual exchanges and to the revitalisation of language learning in the region, thereby ultimately equipping Ireland's workforce with 21st century skills.

Candidate Qualifications/Requirements: Primary degree in a relevant discipline (first class or 2.1)