

Virtual Alliances for Learning Society (VALS) project and the Semester of Code

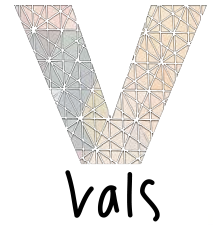
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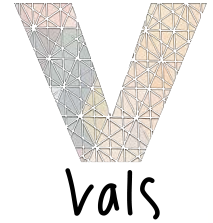
Virtual Alliances for Learning Society (VALS)



- European project for **building knowledge alliances** between Universities and Companies across Europe with the **aim of facing real business problems through an open innovation** approach based on using and developing open software solutions through virtual placements in worldwide Companies and Foundations.
- Supported by
 - *European Union. Lifelong Learning Programme (Sub-Programme Erasmus-Knowledge Alliances)*
- Duration: November 2013 – February 2016
- Total amount: 533.337€

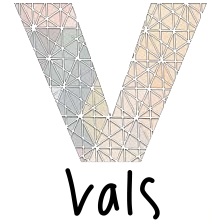
<http://virtualalliances.eu/>

VALS Consortium



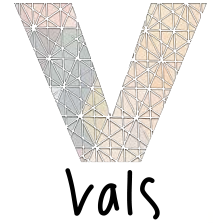
- University of Salamanca / GRIAL, SIPPE (Spain)
- OpenDirective LLP (United Kingdom)
- RayCom B.V. (Netherlands)
- University of Bolton (United Kingdom)
- University of Udine (Italy)
- University of Cyprus (Cyprus)
- Mindshock S.L. (Spain)
- Oxford University - *OSS Watch* (United Kingdom)

VALS procedures



- Knowledge alliances among the entities (both academic and business)
- The most interesting VALS innovation is about the definition of a system of virtual placements for students in companies
 - Entrepreneurship skills promotion
 - Definition of new teaching / learning methods
- Development of the *Semester of Code*

Semester of Code

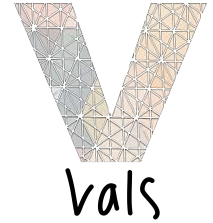


Semester in which one the students have their placements in companies and foundations related to open software

Virtual placements (telework)

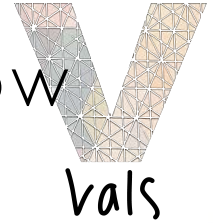
Involved academic tutors (from the universities) and mentors (from the businesses)

VALS projects nature



- Real problems of the participant companies and foundations
 - The student proposes an approach to solve the problem
 - The proposed approach will be implemented during the Semester of Code

Semester of Code – Student workflow



The student decides to participate

The student reviews the projects proposed by the Companies to the VPS website <http://vps2.semesterofcode.com>. If the student likes any of them, finds an academic mentor and applies for the proposal

If the proposal is accepted, the student, the company and the university fix the timeline and other details for the project

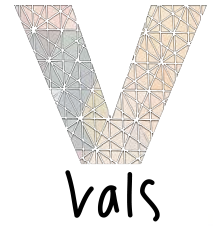
The student can propose an adaptation of the project in order to be recognized as Final Degree Thesis or MsC Thesis

The student develops the project (dates and timeline fixed with the company)

The student submits the project developed within the Semester of Code to its university (if it is necessary)



Some of the Foundations and Institutions that support the *Semester of Code*



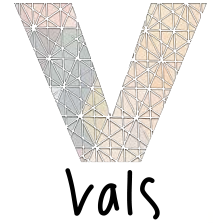
<http://vps2.semesterofcode.com/projects/browse>



The Apache Software
Foundation

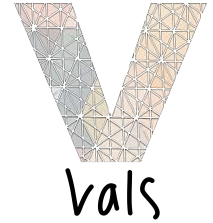


Why to participate in the *Semester of Code?*



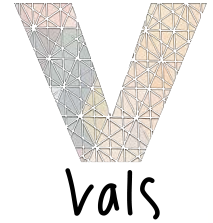
- Because the students can recognize the virtual placements like a regular internship in a business, and getting ECTS credits by this way in their university
- Because the project developed within the Semester of Code could be adapted and reused to be presented as Final Degree Thesis or MsC Thesis (if the academic supervisor and business mentor agree it)
- Because this experience can be the beginning of the students' professional career
- Because these experiences help the students to develop generic skills like problem solving, working in industrial contexts, multidisciplinary teamwork, communication with different types of stakeholders, etc.

The numbers behind the first round of SoC



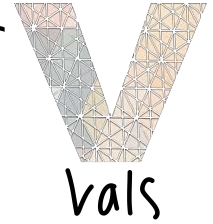
- Some participation data
 - 12 universities
 - 64 companies
 - 237 placement proposals
- 12 proposals submitted by students, 7 active projects
 - 4 open
 - 1 preselected
 - 7 active (accepted)

The numbers behind the second round of SoC



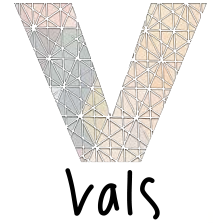
- Some participation data
 - 13 universities
 - 67 companies
 - 291 placement proposals
- 24 proposals submitted by students, 10 active projects
 - 1 open
 - 7 published
 - 10 accepted (active)
 - 2 rejected
 - 4 archived

Total results behind Semester of Code's pilots



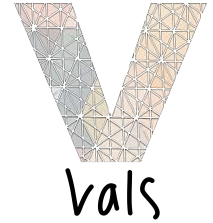
- 13 participant universities (not all of them provide students to SoC)
- 67 participant companies/foundations/projects
 - ~ 300 placements proposals
- 17 students actively involved in placements
 - ~ 30 students applying for placements

Conclusions



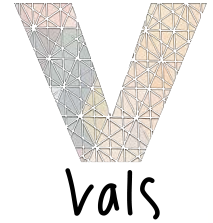
- VALS presents an open innovation initiative with a win-win approach
 - *The students win*
 - *The companies/foundations win*
 - *The universities win*
 - *The society wins*

Conclusions



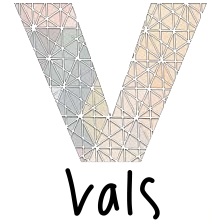
- Students
 - Professional experience in the real business context
 - Contacts in the software industry that can facilitate the start of their career
 - Personal experience due to operate in an international context
 - Academic rewards

Conclusions



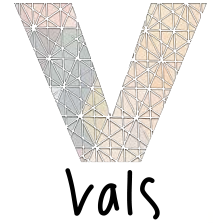
- Business
 - Find talent directly in Universities
 - Knowledge Alliance with the Universities
 - Possibility of transfer knowledge from the University to the Company

Conclusions



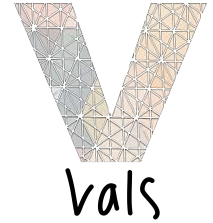
- University
 - New methods for teaching and assessment
 - Long-term Knowledge Alliances with the industry in an international context
 - Possibility of importing successful practices from Business to the University
 - Offering real innovative possibilities to students with a great cost / benefit ratio in a crisis

Conclusions

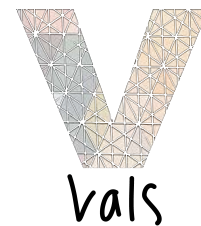


- Society
 - Reduction of the gap between University and Business
 - Better professional qualification obtained under equal opportunities in a time of crisis

And a final thought



- The development of this kind of initiatives is hard and difficult
 - All the stakeholders involved must be motivated
 - Organizers must define well the target audience for each possible stakeholder involved in the process
 - The human factor fuels the process and drives the success, take care about people involved in this kind of initiatives



Strive not to be a success, but
rather to be of value

Albert Einstein

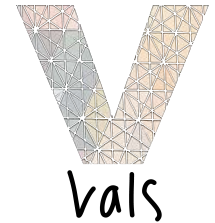


Lifelong
Learning
Programme

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More info

- <http://virtualalliances.eu/>
- <http://semesterofcode.com/>
- <http://vps2.semesterofcode.com>
- <http://grial.usal.es>



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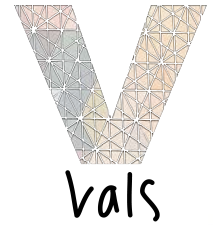
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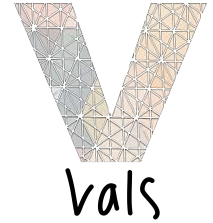
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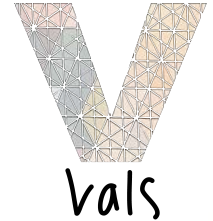
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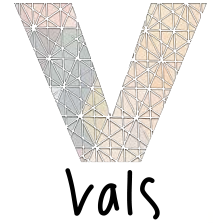


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