



# Healthy Campus Case Study



HEA

An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas  
The Higher Education Authority

# Building Student Connection on-campus: what works

Institution/ Organisation	SETU
Who leads/ led the project?	Faculty of Health Science and student ambassadors.
Date and timeframe	2022-ongoing
Project Rationale	A student-led survey conducted in 2022 measured wellbeing, happiness and levels of trust (WHO Five Well-Being Index; Perceived Stress Scale; SAPAS; PERMA) in 132 students. General mental wellbeing and trust in other people was at a low level. The majority of students felt disengaged from activities on campus and in wider society. In response to these data, a series of initiatives co-created between students and staff sought to address the concerns of students on campus.



Project Overview/ Summary	<p><b>Students were employed as equal partners to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboratively develop student-friendly spaces</li> <li>• Devise events with a global theme</li> <li>• Identify student needs for connection and engagement</li> </ul> <p><b>Student ambassadors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulted with their peers</li> </ul> <p><b>Delivered a range of engagement activities, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student-run sustainable pop-up shop</li> <li>• A documentary screening and panel discussion on undocumented and asylum-seeker work rights</li> <li>• The placement of fun and engaging installations and performances around campus in partnership with Spraoi, Waterford's leading arts organisation</li> </ul> <p><b>Students expressed dissatisfaction with the availability of attractive social and work spaces on campus</b></p> <p><b>In response:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The School of Health Sciences, supported by the HEA SATLE fund, invested in colourful social spaces in its main building</li> </ul>
Project Overview/ Summary (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other Schools followed this approach</li> <li>• Seating in corridors was improved</li> <li>• In 2025, the main thoroughfare was furnished with social and workspaces for student use</li> </ul> <p><b>A peer-to-peer mentoring scheme has been embedded across all Schools</b></p> <p><b>TEACH CoLab (Transnational Education and Community Health Collaboratory) was developed to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address societal challenges</li> <li>• Create a sustainable model for sharing good practice in teaching and learning across disciplines and institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of effective student engagement include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedding volunteering into modules for academic credit</li> <li>• Student-led podcasts</li> <li>• Health promotion and sport studies students delivering EDI, screening and health events on campus</li> <li>• Transdisciplinary collaboration</li> <li>• Evening-time quizzes</li> </ul>

Project Overview/ Summary (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student-led magazine initiated and edited by students in the School of Humanities</li> </ul> <p><b>Despite these initiatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges remain</li> <li>• Staff-student-community collaboration requires significant time and energy</li> <li>• Institutional-level support is needed to sustain and expand this work</li> </ul>
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Key Learning Points	<p>Initiatives that are student-led take time to initiate and support but offer the best opportunity for long term success. Relatively small investments could yield significant gain, for example enabling Humanities staff and students to take charge of spaces on campus, embedding student-led initiatives into the curriculum, incentivizing cross-Faculty collaboration which impacts on spaces and places for connection</p>
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Limerick Framework for Action			Whole Campus Approach	Type of Evaluation
Ethos	Partnership	Research	Campus Culture & Communications (Pillar 3)	Formative Evaluation
Culture	Students			Process Evaluation
				Summative Evaluation

