

The URV Service Learning Programme

**Guide for
entities**



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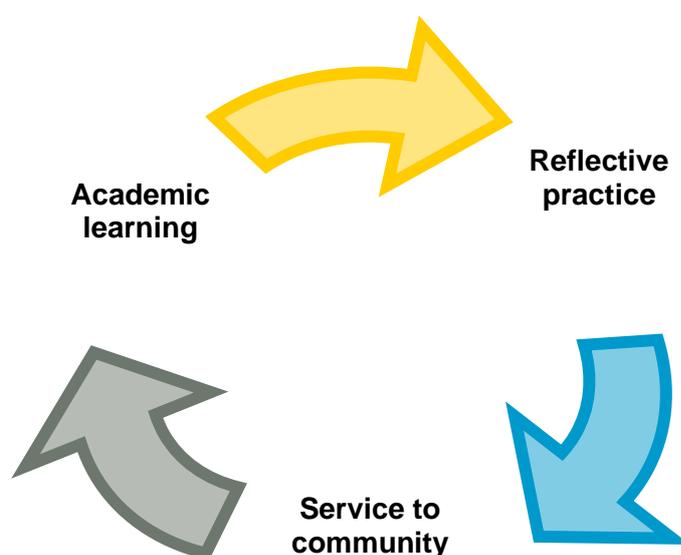


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1. WHAT IS SERVICE LEARNING?

Service Learning (hereafter SL) is an educational proposal that combines the processes of learning and service to the community in one project, thus creating a tool for the comprehensive training of the student.

Its primary object is to train socially responsible professionals, given that, together with the learning of the content, competencies and skills associated with each qualification, it develops civic and social engagement through reflective practice.



Consequently, SL must:

- Combine academic learning and service to the community.
- Be related to the student's curriculum.
- Include reflective practice.
- Foster the student's acquisition of transversal competency CT7, which is to learn how to: *Apply the principles of ethics and social responsibility as a citizen and professional.*

A list of the Service Learning projects carried out by the URV to date can be found [here](#)

What Service Learning is not

SL is **not volunteer work**. In volunteer work, the only aim is to provide a service to the community. In contrast, SL projects have two simultaneous aims: service to the community and student learning as a result of this service. Reflective practice is also an important and necessary component.

SL does not always take the format of **external curricular internships**. The external internships subject is one of the ways SL is incorporated into the curriculum, but it is not the only one.

SL is not always associated with **community-based research**, but it may be, depending on the nature of the service provided.

SL is not generally associated with **international cooperation in development**, but it may be, depending on the nature of the beneficiary and/or the service provided.

2. BENEFITS OF SL

As stated in the Framework Document of the URV's Service Learning Programme, approved by the Governing Council on 23 February 2012, the benefits of SL extend to the teaching staff, the students, the beneficiaries and the University insofar as it:

BENEFITS OF SL FOR THE COMMUNITY

- Provides an opportunity to train a generation of citizens and professionals and instil in them a strong sense of social commitment.
- Provides support for socially vulnerable individuals and groups.
- Enriches society by providing innovative programmes and services in the community (social innovation).
- Offers an opportunity for close collaboration between students, community and professionals.
- Encourages those involved to regard with the URV as their own university.

BENEFITS OF SL FOR STUDENTS

- It strengthens the link between student and university (sense of belonging)
- It encourages the student to actively engage with their environment.
- It develops the student's commitment to ethics and social responsibility as a citizen and professional in a manner that is effective and which can be evaluated.
- It enables students to participate in processes of social innovation.
- It increases awareness of diversity and multiculturalism.
- It develops the student's acquisition of the transversal and degree-specific competencies in a manner that is effective and which can be evaluated.
- It increases the student's desire to learn.
- It strengthens the relationship between student and teachers, thus favouring effective learning processes.
- It adds new perspectives to careers guidance processes.

BENEFITS OF SL FOR TEACHERS

- It enables teachers to participate directly in University Social Responsibility (USR).
- It enables teachers to collaborate with organisations and entities from the community in the development of teaching and potentially adds another dimension to their research.
- It enables teachers to participate in processes of social innovation.
- It enables teachers to connect their teaching with the other two missions of the university: research and the third mission.
- It encourages interdisciplinary teaching teams.
- It promotes the role of the teacher as mentor, guide and facilitator of the learning favoured by the EHEA.
- It increases participation and motivation among students.
- It facilitates training and competency-based evaluation and in particular the transversal competency of commitment to ethics and social responsibility as a citizen and as a professional.

BENEFITS OF SL FOR THE UNIVERSITY

- It encourages the direct participation of the whole university community in USR.
- It helps to develop the third mission (commitment to people, to science, to the community and to values).
- It is privileged framework that makes effective the comprehensive educational model that turns students into citizens who through their cultural awareness, specific knowledge and skills and critical and humanist spirit will form the basis of a fairer, more compassionate and sustainable society.
- It promotes a comprehensive vision of the University's various missions.
- It promotes the processes that lead to teaching improvement and quality.
- It increases the possibility of creating links with the territory by offering new opportunities for direct collaboration with teaching staff and students.
- It reinforces the role of the University as an institution that contributes social and economic well-being to the territory.
- It promotes processes of social innovation.
- It provides the University with its own distinct identity and personality.
- It fosters a sense of belonging to the University.

3. WHO CAN BE A BENEFICIARY OF SL?

Any group, entity, association, NGO or public institution can be a beneficiary of SL provided that they meet the following requirements:

- In general, direct or indirect beneficiaries of SL must be socially vulnerable individuals or groups.
- Beneficiaries of SL may also be entities and institutions whose purpose is to work for the common good.
- In principle, companies or other private entities or organizations cannot be beneficiaries of the service. Nevertheless, such entities may benefit from student activities aimed at the common good during the course of their duties whilst engaged at the said entities. Various factors are taken into account when deciding whether a company qualifies as a beneficiary of SL (for example, the nature or size of the company) and each company must be analysed on a case by case basis. Individualised support may be received by sending an email to aps@urv.cat.
- The students must engage in non-profit activities.
- The student's activities must not generate unfair competition in the professional sector. In order to ensure this, it is essential that the beneficiary bears in mind that the student is engaged in a learning activity as part of their university training, which means that they may make mistakes and that the final product may be unsatisfactory. The URV must work to ensure the quality of the service, but under no circumstances does the URV commit to providing a professional service through its SL programme.

It is also recommended that

- as far as is possible products resulting from the SL are made freely available to the public.

All of the entities that collaborate in the URV's SL programme
can be found on the map of SL beneficiaries.

4. OBLIGATIONS OF THE BENEFICIARY OF SL

- Beneficiaries of SL have the obligation to: Receive students in an appropriate manner and tell them which tasks they are expected to carry out.
- Adapt the activities to be carried out to the professional training and competences of the students. The content may not under any circumstances substitute the work carried out by employees. The students are not professionals in the corresponding field, they are learning; therefore, they may make mistakes.
- Provide the students with all the resources needed to carry out the tasks that have been assigned to them.
- Provide the students with written information regarding the internal regulations applicable at the entity.
- Appoint one of the qualified professionals who work for the entity as a point of contact who will supervise the students' activities, ensure they receive proper training and academically assess them if considered appropriate by the students' academic tutor.
- Inform the academic tutor about any incident involving the student so that it can be resolved jointly.

ONLINE APPLICATION

In order to become beneficiaries of the URV's SL programme, entities must first check that they meet the requirements and then complete their application online on the website of the URV.

COLLABORATION

Once the SL project has been officially validated, the collaboration agreement will be prepared so that Service Learning projects can be carried out between the Universitat Rovira i Virgili and the entity. For any queries regarding this process, contact aps@urv.cat.

5. RECOGNITION OF THE SLP

In accordance with the relevant procedure, an SL experience within the URV's SL programme and validated by Teaching and Academic Policy Committee, as delegated by the Governing Council, leads to formal recognition for the teaching staff, the students and the collaborating entities.

For the collaborating entities, this recognition includes:

- A participation certificate issued by the University.
- Visibility: The entity is added to the Map of beneficiaries of the service, the [list of projects](#) on the SLP website and various materials promoting the SLP.
- The chance for individuals from the beneficiary organizations to participate in the [Friends of the URV Programme](#) under the terms and conditions established in the present guide. Membership of the Friends of the URV Programme entitles the individual to a membership card that enables them to access various services.
 - ✓ A URV email address and the chance to receive news and information from the URV (optional).
 - ✓ Services from the Learning and Research Resources Centre (CRAI): access to premises, the document loans service, digital resources, etc.
 - ✓ Access to the URV's Wi-Fi network.
 - ✓ Access to internal URV information via the Friends of the URV Intranet.
 - ✓ Reduced registration fees for courses organized by the Language Service of the URV.
 - ✓ Invitations to cultural and academic activities.
 - ✓ Participation in URV cultural groups such as the University Choir, the Choral Society and Theatre Group.
 - ✓ Access to URV products.
 - ✓ Financial services associated with the card.
 - ✓ Discounts on certain URV activities.

6. FUNDING OF SL

SL does not necessarily involve additional costs. Many SLP experiences can be carried out without the need for funding. This will depend on how the activity is set up, which is why when designing a SL proposal, it is necessary to quantify exactly the costs involved and the resources available.

Above all, it must be remembered that SL is an activity that is carried out in the context of subjects from the curriculum and, as such, is funded through the normal funding channels used for teaching purposes, which vary depending on whether the student is studying an official qualification or a URV specific qualification.

If normal funding is insufficient, it is important to be aware that currently the SLP of the URV does not have its own funds from which to award grants for SLP experiences, which means that the promoter of the experience must explore alternative funding, if necessary.



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