Connecting Universities and Communities

The EMERGE Third-Place Network

June 2026

emerge

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

UNIVERSIDADE DA CORUÑA

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Europa-Universität Flensburg

ubs

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Empowering the Margins of Europe through Regional and Global Engagement Alliance

Contents

Executive Summary 3
1. Introduction and context 4
1.1 About EMERGE and its mission 4
1.2 Community engagement and the role of third places 4
2. Initial EMERGE third-place network 6
3. How the network is active in practice 7
3.1 Main ways in which the network is being used 7
3.2 Mentor and host-organisation activation 8
3.3 BRIDGE programme and community-engaged internships 10
3.4 Contact points for migrants and refugees 11
4. Examples from partner institutions 13
5. Overview of activities across the Alliance 22
6. Sustainability of the network and next steps 24
7. Conclusion 25

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Executive Summary

This overview presents the first active stage of the EMERGE third-place network. It shows that the Alliance has moved from mapping and conceptual work towards a formalised, flexible network of community-facing spaces and organisations. These third places allow universities, students, researchers and external stakeholders to co-create knowledge, develop community-engaged learning and research, and test new forms of regional collaboration.

The collected evidence confirms the existence of an initial network based on memoranda of understanding, cooperation agreements and third-place or associate partner confirmation letters. These documents connect EMERGE universities with a diverse range of organisations, including community services, cultural centres, social innovation spaces, schools, healthcare innovation actors, research transfer centres and regional development organisations. The network is already active through activities such as TEFCE mapping, reflection and planning workshops, EMERGE Hub activities, information sessions, the BRIDGE community engagement internship programme, citizens' assembly formats, working groups on third places, and student internships hosted by community-based organisations.

The evidence also shows several mutually reinforcing ways in which the network is being activated in practice. First, mentors, third places and community partners are being identified, informed about cooperation opportunities and involved in a co-creation process to develop support for mentors based on their expectations and needs. Second, the BRIDGE programme provides a structured community-engaged internship pathway that links students, academic supervisors and third-place or community mentors. Third, contact points for migrants and refugees show how inclusion strategies can be developed in cooperation with community partners. At this initial stage, the network should be understood as a basic active layer rather than a closed list of partners. Its role is to provide the first visible infrastructure for community engagement in EMERGE and to create the conditions for further expansion into a broader third-place ecosystem, shaped by each partner institution's needs, regional context and existing stakeholder relationships.

1. Introduction and context

1.1 About EMERGE and its mission

EMERGE – Empowering the Margins of Europe through Regional and Global Engagement – is a European University Alliance uniting nine universities from Ireland, France, Greece, Norway, Germany, Slovakia, Spain, and Cyprus. Together, we advance a shared commitment to inclusion, solidarity, resilience, multilingualism, multiculturalism, sustainability, and societal engagement as a core mission of the Alliance.

The Alliance's mission reflects the belief that excellence in higher education must be both inclusive and regionally grounded. EMERGE works to connect local strengths with European and international cooperation, strengthening societal engagement, promoting mobility, supporting research collaboration, and encouraging innovation that benefits all regions of Europe, including those often considered peripheral.

1.2 Community engagement and the role of third places

The EMERGE Alliance is committed to empowering the geographical and social margins of Europe by engaging students, educators, researchers, and community partners in inclusive, transformative collaboration. Therefore, community engagement is treated as a strategic dimension of the university and as a practical way of connecting education, research and regional development. Third places are understood as intermediary spaces and organisations that support interaction between universities and society. They may be physical venues, community hubs, civic organisations, social innovation spaces, cultural centres, schools, public or non-profit services, or other trusted interfaces where knowledge can be co-created with stakeholders. The EMERGE network of third places and community partners provides powerful platform for bridging higher education with regional development, civic engagement, and intercultural learning throughout the CE internship, CE fellowships, and mentoring program. By integrating Third Places and other partners into the educational and research ecosystem, EMERGE offers transformative opportunities for students,

researchers, and communities, creating a genuinely inclusive and future-ready European University model.

Cooperation within the EMERGE network of third places and community partners is grounded in the principle of reciprocity—the network is intentionally designed to be mutually beneficial for students, scholars and the communities or organisations they engage with. Students gain meaningful, real-world experience and intercultural skills, while local communities benefit from fresh perspectives, knowledge exchange, and active support in addressing regional challenges. The researchers are co-creating the knowledge with communities.

To demonstrate how this approach is being put into practice, the report draws on a broad set of supporting evidence collected across the EMERGE Alliance. This evidence includes formal cooperation documents, partner activity records, materials related to mentoring and community-engaged internships, documentation of contact points for migrants and refugees, as well as public communication outputs from partner institutions. Taken together, these materials show how the third-place network has been formally established, how it is already being activated through concrete activities, and how it creates the conditions for further cooperation between EMERGE universities, third places and community partners.

2. Initial EMERGE third-place network

The collected evidence shows that EMERGE has already developed a diverse initial network of third places and community partners. These organisations are intentionally not uniform. The network brings together social and community services, cultural and independent centres, research-transfer organisations, healthcare innovation actors, regional development bodies, university-based social innovation spaces, neighbourhood third places, organisations working with migrants and refugees, civic and volunteer structures, and other public-interest actors. This diversity is one of the strengths of the network, as it allows each partner university to build cooperation that reflects its own regional context, community needs and existing relationships.

Partner	Third place / community-facing organisation	Stakeholder type	Formal evidence	Main role in the network
UMB	Záhrada - Centre of Independent Culture	Culture/civic space; social services	Cooperation agreements	Community-engaged education/research, internships, volunteer awareness, civic engagement and EMERGE-related cooperation
UL	Our Lady of Lourdes Community Services Group	Community services and social inclusion hub	MoU with UL Engage	Community-based research, engaged learning, poverty/social exclusion response, adult education and community support
UDC	CISPAC - Centro de Investigación das Paisaxes Atlánticas Culturáis	Research-transfer and territorial knowledge centre	Inter-university cooperation agreement	Knowledge transfer, social/economic impact, territorial research and stakeholder collaboration
DUTH	Philoproodos Enosis Xanthis	Cultural association	MoU / associate partner confirmations	Cultural, educational, outreach and co-developed learning activities linked to WPs 2, 3 and 7
UBS	PFT ComposiTIC	Innovation and technology platform	Third-place confirmation letter	Innovation activities, composite materials expertise, seminars/workshops, regional advising and hosting internships/fellowships
INN	Helseinn; PARK / Hamarregionen Utvikling	Healthcare innovation; regional development/third-place environment	Third-place confirmation letters	Healthcare-system knowledge, innovation activities, regional advising, co-creation spaces and potential internships/fellowships
UR2	ESS CARGO & CIE; Maison de quartier de Villejean	University-neighbourhood third place; neighbourhood community space	Partnership agreement and activity evidence	Social and ecological initiatives, shared governance, student and resident engagement, internships and working groups
NUP	Cyprus Red Cross Society - Paphos Branch; Kivotos Foundation; UNHCR Cyprus;	Humanitarian organisation; social inclusion/refugee support; education and diversity stakeholders	MoU/addendum and cooperation documents	Student internships/fellowships, community engagement, refugee inclusion, educational access, volunteering, public events and Hub-based dialogue

EUF	Flüchtlingshilfe Flensburg e.V.; Engagiert in Flensburg; IBAF and other regional contacts	Refugee and migrant support; volunteering/civic engagement; lifelong learning and social support actors	MoU, meeting records and Hub activity evidence	Third-place and contact-point model, study/career orientation, volunteer engagement, community needs identification and Hub-based networking

3. How the network is active in practice

Active network means that the network has moved beyond mapping or intention and is already being used for concrete activities. The operational character is visible in the fact that partners have involved community stakeholders in workshops, used EMERGE hubs and third places as contact and exchange points, activated mentors and internship hosts, and connected local partner ecosystems with alliance-level coordination.

3.1 Main ways in which the network is being used

- **Community engagement mapping and reflection**: universities have involved staff, students and external stakeholders in workshops to identify needs, map existing engagement practices and shape institutional community engagement strategies.

- **EMERGE Hubs and contact points**: EMERGE Hub activities, including Hub launches, Open Days, information corners, public engagement activities and volunteer meet-ups such as EMERGE@TheGlobe at UL and the UBS Hub, provide visible spaces for discussion, information, networking and cooperation around EMERGE and community engagement.

- **Internships and fellowships**: the BRIDGE programme and partner-level internships demonstrate that third places can act as learning and practice environments for students and young researchers.

- **Mentor activation**: information sessions and mentor engagement activities connected NGOs, schools, public institutions and practitioners with WP2 pathways.

- **Public and civic formats**: citizen assemblies and public events show how community members can take part in deliberation, selection and support of university-community projects.

- **Working groups and continuous design**: regular working groups on third places show that third-place development is a continuing governance and design process rather than a one-off event.

- **Mentor and host-organisation activation**: the open call, information session, Expression of Interest form and mentor database turn the third-place network into a practical mentoring ecosystem.

- **BRIDGE programme implementation**: the blended internship course and CE Internship Manual define how third places host student teams, provide community mentoring and contribute to reflection and evaluation.

- **Contact points for migrants and refugee**s: the contact point framework links the network to concrete inclusion services, study and career counselling, community needs identification and the transfer of identified educational needs to WP5. The evidence shows both university-based and partnership-based models, including cooperation with organisations supporting refugees and migrants.

3.2 Mentor and host-organisation activation

The mentor pathway is one of the clearest mechanisms through which the third-place network becomes operational. Instead of treating third places only as formally listed organisations, alliance uses them as a pool of in-field mentors, host organisations and knowledge partners for community-engaged internships and fellowships.

The mentoring framework clarifies that EMERGE differentiates between practice-oriented internships and research-oriented fellowships, and that community-engaged formats require professional as well as community-oriented mentoring. The operational logic is sequenced as: open call, framework

development, capacity building, co-design of offers and implementation of placements.

The open call invites NGOs, third places, schools, public institutions, community hubs and practitioners to join a European mentoring ecosystem. It emphasises co-design around community needs, organisational capacity-building, mentor training and certification, peer exchange and flexible participation without an immediate obligation to host a placement. An online information session for potential mentors was prepared and realized in April 2026. The session explained community-engaged internships and fellowships, presented how university cooperation can support organisational goals, introduced mentor training and created a space for co-creation with mentors.

Evidence item	What it demonstrates
Mentoring framework	Common understanding of internships, fellowships, community engagement, mentor roles, capacity-building sequence and quality expectations.
Open call for mentors and host organisations	Operational entry point for NGOs, third places, schools, public institutions and practitioners to join the EMERGE mentor ecosystem.
Information session for potential mentors	Active outreach and onboarding of community partners; clarification of benefits, expectations, training and flexible participation.
Mentor database	Internal alliance-wide mentor database covering the major partner contexts; used for matching, communication, training preparation and future placement development. Personal contact details remain internal.
Expression of Interest results	Organisational responses indicating interest in internships/fellowships, mentor training, peer exchange and academic collaboration.

The mentor engagement evidence confirms that EMERGE has established an initial alliance-wide mentoring capacity linked to third places, community partners and other relevant external organisations. The internal mentor database demonstrates that the mentoring network already covers all major partner contexts across the alliance, including organisations connected to UMB, DUTH, EUF, NUP, UDC, UBS, UR2, INN and UL. The updated Expression of Interest survey further confirms growing interest among external stakeholders in becoming part of the EMERGE community-engaged ecosystem. Responding

organisations express interest in different forms of cooperation, including community-engaged internships, community-engaged fellowships and exploratory cooperation where concrete placement or research topics will be co-designed at a later stage. The survey results also indicate strong openness to online mentor training, confirming the relevance of capacity building as a key mechanism for making the third-place network operational. Overall, the evidence shows that the network is not limited to formal partnership agreements, but is being activated through mentor identification, stakeholder onboarding, training preparation and the gradual co-design of future internship and fellowship opportunities. The thematic scope of the interested organisations is broad and aligned with EMERGE priorities, covering education, social inclusion, migration and diversity, community development, culture and creative sectors, sustainability and environment, youth work, regional development, social innovation, volunteering and humanitarian work.

3.3 BRIDGE programme and community-engaged internships

The BRIDGE programme is the main structured educational route through which the network of third places and community partners is translated into concrete student engagement. It provides a blended, mobility-based and practice-oriented course entitled BRIDGE - Active Community Engagement in Practice, with preparatory online learning, field placement and structured reflection.

The preparatory phase includes modules on civic engagement and citizenship, rural realities and local contexts, ethics and cultural humility, social justice and systemic change, communication and teamwork, project design, asset mapping and needs assessment, digital empowerment and creative methods, community partnership and reciprocity, and reflection, resilience and well-being.

The field placement phase activates the network directly: students work in international teams with local organisations and stakeholders, engage with real community needs, apply the online course content and participate in ongoing reflection. The reflection and evaluation phase then documents learning, peer exchange and project impact.

The EMERGE CE Internship Manual further operationalises the process through a staged workflow: identifying community partners, planning placements, promoting internships, reviewing student applications, confirming placements and mobility agreements, providing community engagement training, arranging student travel, offering host orientation, implementing internships and conducting post-internship evaluation.

BRIDGE / CE Internship element	Operational contribution to the third-place network
Preparatory online course	Creates a shared conceptual, ethical and intercultural foundation before students enter community settings.
Community partner meeting	Connects selected students and community partners before the placement and clarifies expectations.
Field placement	Uses third places and community partners as real learning environments linked to local needs.
Mentoring structure	Combines academic mentoring with community mentoring and supports quality and reciprocity.
Reflection and evaluation	Documents learning, partner experience and impact, creating feedback for future network development.

BRIDGE programme is therefore not only an educational activity. It is an operational interface through which the third-place network becomes visible, used and evaluated in practice.

3.4 Contact points for migrants and refugees

The third operational route is the establishment of Career and Study Counselling Contact Points for Community Members. These contact points extend the third-place logic towards inclusive access to higher education, lifelong learning and career orientation for refugees and migrants.

The framework defines two possible models: integration within an existing university unit, or a partnership-based model with external stakeholders such as NGOs, community centres, employment or integration services. In both cases, the contact point should be connected to a physical location, preferably the EMERGE Hub or partner premises, and should be visibly labelled as part of EMERGE.

Services may include individual study orientation counselling, career counselling, guidance on recognition of prior learning and qualifications, referrals to university or external services, group information sessions, career planning workshops, orientation sessions and thematic events responding to identified community needs.

Contact point component	What it contributes
Common framework	Defines objective, models, physical location, visibility, activities, annual minimum activity, WP5 link and monitoring requirements.
Partnership model	Allows universities to cooperate with NGOs, community centres and integration/employment services rather than creating parallel structures.
Examples in practice	UMB contact point hosted by UMB Engage in cooperation with NGO People in Peril and Ukraine Centre; EUF partnership-based model with Flüchtlingshilfe Flensburg; NUP cooperation with UNHCR Cyprus linked to educational access and refugee inclusion.
Types of services	Individual and group study/career counselling, orientation, referrals and identification of educational needs.

This mechanism demonstrates that the third-place network supports not only internships and mentoring but also access-oriented community services for groups. Contact points are therefore treated as flexible cooperation models embedded in existing community partnerships, rather than as isolated administrative structures.

4. Examples from partner institutions

Matej Bel University (Slovakia) demonstrates the network in practice through community engagement (TEFCE) mapping and planning workshops involving employees, students and external stakeholders, alliance-level coordination of the BRIDGE matchmaking session, and an online mentor engagement session involving third places and regional actors such as Záhrada, BBSK, BeeVolunteer, Mladí BB and the Banská Bystrica municipality. The uploaded cooperation agreement with Záhrada provide formal anchors for community-engaged education, research, internships and civic engagement activities.

University of Limerick (Ireland) demonstrates operationality through TEFCE meetings, the EMERGE@TheGlobe Hub launch, BRIDGE internship development and the UL Citizens Assembly. The MoU with Our Lady of Lourdes Community Services Group is particularly relevant because it formalises cooperation with a community hub focused on poverty alleviation, social inclusion, adult education and community support.

University of A Coruna (Spain) reports a reflection workshop involving external stakeholders and representatives of third places. The CISPAC cooperation agreement provides a formalised research-transfer interface linked to social, territorial, cultural and economic dimensions of regional development.

Democritus University of Thrace (Greece) evidence includes the MoU with Philoproodos Enosis Xanthis and several associate partner confirmations from regional schools, demonstrators regarding mapping workshops with community representatives, HUB workshops. Together, these documents show a regional educational and cultural network that can contribute to outreach, workshops, co-developed modules and community engagement activities.

Université Bretagne Sud (France) demonstrates operationality through TEFCE mapping workshops and a Hub activity in which steering committee members maintain an on-site presence to provide information and facilitate exchange about the Alliance. The confirmation from PFT ComposiTIC adds a third-place partner with innovation and industrialisation expertise and willingness to contribute to seminars, workshops, meetings, outreach and internships/fellowships.

University of Inland (Norway) evidence includes Helseinn and PARK/Hamarregionen Utvikling as third-place confirmations. These partners contribute healthcare innovation, regional development knowledge, cross-sector cooperation, and potential environments for co-creation and internships/fellowships.

Rennes 2 University (France) demonstrates operationality through a TEFCE reflection workshop with ESS CARGO and Maison de quartier de Villejean, an EMERGE internship hosted at ESS CARGO, and a regular working group on third places. The ESS CARGO agreement shows a mature third-place model that connects the university campus, students, residents, associations and social/ecological initiatives in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Neapolis University Pafos (Cyprus) demonstrates operationality through formal third-place cooperation with the Cyprus Red Cross Society and additional partnerships relevant to inclusion, diversity and refugee support, including Kivotos Foundation and UNHCR Cyprus. These cooperation structures support student placements and internships, thesis and dissertation collaboration, joint academic and educational activities, research cooperation, access to educational opportunities for refugees and public engagement. The EMERGE Hub Open Days at NUP further show the Hub as an open space for dialogue, exchange of ideas, mobility information, participatory activities and collaboration between students, staff, artists, researchers and the wider community.

Europa-Universität Flensburg (Germany) demonstrates operationality through the EMERGE Hub as a regional interface, cooperation with Flüchtlingshilfe Flensburg and engagement formats connecting volunteers, local actors, international students and wider community members. The cooperation with Flüchtlingshilfe Flensburg establishes a partnership-based third-place and contact-point model focused on refugees and migrants, including low-threshold outreach, study and career orientation, the identification of community needs and participation in the development of needs-based educational offers. The Engagement Hub format further activates the network by creating an accessible meet-up space for exchange between engaged citizens, volunteers and students, with attention to language barriers, access and expectations.

5. Overview of activities across the Alliance

Partner	Level	Type	Activity	Date/period	Operational relevance
UMB	University	Workshops	TEFCE Mapping and Planning Workshops	May-Nov 2025	8 workshops with employees, students and external stakeholders; more than 70 stakeholders involved.
UMB	Alliance	Internship activity	BRIDGE Programme - Matchmaking Session	Apr 2026	Coordination between EMERGE partners on allocation of internships and cooperation with community partners.
UMB	Alliance	Mentor session	Online Mentor Engagement Information Session	Apr 2026	Information session for NGOs, schools, public institutions and practitioners interested in mentoring.
UL	University	Workshop / meeting	TEFCE Mapping and Planning Workshops	Jul 2025-Jan 2026	Planning and stakeholder meetings involving UL Engage, mentors, staff and more than 20 community partners.
UL	University	Hub activity	EMERGE@TheGlobe Hub Launch	Feb 2026	Community engagement workshop and panel discussion with students involved in community-based collaborative projects.
UL	Alliance	Internship activity	BRIDGE Internship Opportunities	Jul 2025-ongoing	Development and promotion of BRIDGE internship resources and partner coordination.
UL	University	Open day / civic format	UL Citizens Assembly 2026	Nov 2025-Apr 2026	Citizens considered university-community collaborative projects and selected projects for support.
UDC	University	Workshop / meeting	Reflection workshop	19 Sep 2025	Workshop with external stakeholders during CE mapping and reflection activities.
DUTH	University / Regional	Workshop / mapping activity	Mapping and reflection workshops with community representatives	2025–2026	DUTH involved community representatives and regional stakeholders in mapping and reflection activities, supporting the identification of community engagement needs, existing practices and opportunities for future cooperation
DUTH	University/regional	Hub activity / workshop	EMERGE Hub workshops and community engagement activities	2025–2026	DUTH activated Hub-related activities as spaces for dialogue with community and educational stakeholders.
DUTH	Alliance / Regional	Mentor engagement	Meetings with potential CE internship and fellowship mentors from the network	2026	DUTH engaged regional mentors to explore future community-engaged internships, fellowships and student placements.
UBS	University	Workshop / meeting	TEFCE Mapping and Planning Workshops	Sep-Oct 2025	Two workshops with staff, students and external stakeholders.
UBS	University	Hub activity	UBS Hub activity	Apr-May 2026	On-site EMERGE information and discussion space maintained by Alliance members.
UR2	University	Workshop / meeting	TEFCE reflection workshop	1 October 2025	TEFCE workshop with students, researchers and representatives

					of community partners/third places.
UR2	Alliance	Internship activity	Internship at ESS CARGO	13 Apr-7 May 2026	Student internship supporting activities organised with ESS CARGO team, students and residents.
UR2	University	Working group	Working group on third places	Monthly	Regular work on challenges, intended uses and promotion of campus third places.
NUP	University	Hub / Open Day	EMERGE Hub Open Days	25-27 Feb 2026	Three-day programme of open activities connecting students, staff, artists, researchers and the wider community through dialogue, exhibitions, mobility information, participatory activities and a call for ideas.
NUP	University	Formal cooperation / inclusion activity	Renewed cooperation with UNHCR Cyprus	May 2026	Cooperation focused on making educational opportunities more accessible to refugees, supporting training and research on refugee law and integration, and creating internship links.
NUP	University	Third-place cooperation	Cyprus Red Cross Society - Paphos Branch	May 2026	Formal designation of the Paphos Branch as an EMERGE third place for internships, fellowships, mentoring and community engagement initiatives.
NUP	University	Career / community event	NUP Career Days 2026	May 2026	Career orientation and employability activities connecting students with professionals, alumni and external stakeholders.
EUF	University / Regional	Hub activity	Engagement Hub / Meet-up	May 2026	EMERGE Hub activity with the City of Flensburg and Engagiert in Flensburg connecting volunteers, international students, local organisations and interested citizens.
EUF	University / Regional	Formal cooperation / contact point	Cooperation with Flüchtlingshilfe Flensburg	May 2026	Partnership-based third-place and contact-point model supporting refugees and migrants through study/career orientation, needs identification and low-threshold outreach.
EUF	University / Regional	Hub opening / public engagement	EMERGE Hub opening at EUF	2026	Public Hub evidence showing the EMERGE Hub as a visible and accessible interface involving students, staff and external visitors.
EUF	University / Regional	Lifelong learning / community needs	EMERGE - IBAF cooperation discussion	Sep 2025	Exploration of future learning offers and support for people with disrupted educational or employment trajectories and psychosocial support needs.
INN	University / Regional	Environmental week / community activity	Environmental Week activities with Hamarregionen Utvikling and regional municipalities	2026	Teacher education students created an activity trail for schools and citizens during the Environmental Week of Hamar, Stange, Løten and Ringsaker, linking student engagement with regional priorities on environment, climate and nature.
INN	University / Regional	Workshop / resilience and sustainability	VR simulation workshop in INN Future Classroom Lab	Apr 2026	INN hosted a cross-sector workshop testing VR-based simulations for resilient and sustainable communities,

					involving regional innovation, public-sector and technology actors.
INN	Alliance / Regional	Mentor engagement	Participation of regional third-place actors in the EMERGE Call for Mentors meeting	Mar 2026	Regional actors contributed to mentor engagement activities, while HelseINN supported network sharing to involve further community partners in future fellowship cooperation.
INN	Alliance	Fellowship / research cooperation	Preparation of senior fellowship cooperation with CCL and SePU	2026	INN prepared incoming senior fellowship cooperation with EMERGE partners, strengthening the network through research-based mobility, knowledge exchange and collaboration between academic and community-oriented centres.

6. Sustainability of the network and next steps

The network will be continuously expanded according to institutional needs and emerging opportunities. The next phase should focus on:

- completing and regularly updating the third-place database across all partners;
- linking the third-place network with BRIDGE internships/fellowships and mentor engagement;
- using EMERGE Hubs as contact and coordination spaces for local community engagement activities;
- documenting public-facing practices through short profiles, web texts and social media materials prepared in cooperation with WP9;
- collecting annual activity evidence from partners to show how the network evolves into a broader ecosystem.
- protecting personal data in public reporting by publishing aggregated mentor and contact-point information while keeping internal contact details in secure databases;

- using the mentor Expression of Interest data to co-design concrete placement offers and to identify capacity-building needs for partners and community organisations;

- connecting contact point evidence with WP5 so that community-identified learning needs can inform tailor-made educational provisions;

- Finalize the EMERGE Framework for Community-Engaged Internships, Fellowships and Mentoring based on the co-creation session with third places and second co-creation session with Students Governing Board

7. Conclusion

The initial EMERGE third-place network is beginning to take shape as a living space for cooperation, exchange and community engagement. It is supported by formal cooperation documents and brought to life through practical mechanisms such as mentor onboarding and databases, BRIDGE community-engaged internships, contact points for migrants and refugees, public and civic activities, hubs, reflection workshops and locally developed pilot initiatives.

The available evidence shows that the network is already becoming an interface for knowledge co-creation, community-engaged education and research, mentoring, inclusion services, volunteering, civic participation and regional partnership building. In the next phase, attention should turn to how these emerging routes can grow from initial structures into a broader third-place ecosystem across the Alliance.

EMERGE: Building Bridges Between Universities and Communities

Connecting 9 European universities in peripheral regions with local **"Third Places"** for co-creation and social inclusion.

9 PARTNER UNIVERSITIES ACROSS EUROPE

Connecting regions geographically or institutionally distant from major decision centers.

THE BRIDGE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

A structured pathway linking students and academic supervisors with community-based mentors for field placements.

ACTIVE MENTORING ECOSYSTEM

An alliance-wide database of professional mentors from NGOs, schools, and public institutions.

INCLUSIVE CONTACT POINTS

Specialized support hubs providing career and study counseling for migrants and refugees.

WHAT IS A "THIRD PLACE"?

Physical or virtual interfaces where knowledge is co-created with citizens and local stakeholders.

A DIVERSE NETWORK OF REGIONAL PARTNERS

CULTURAL & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

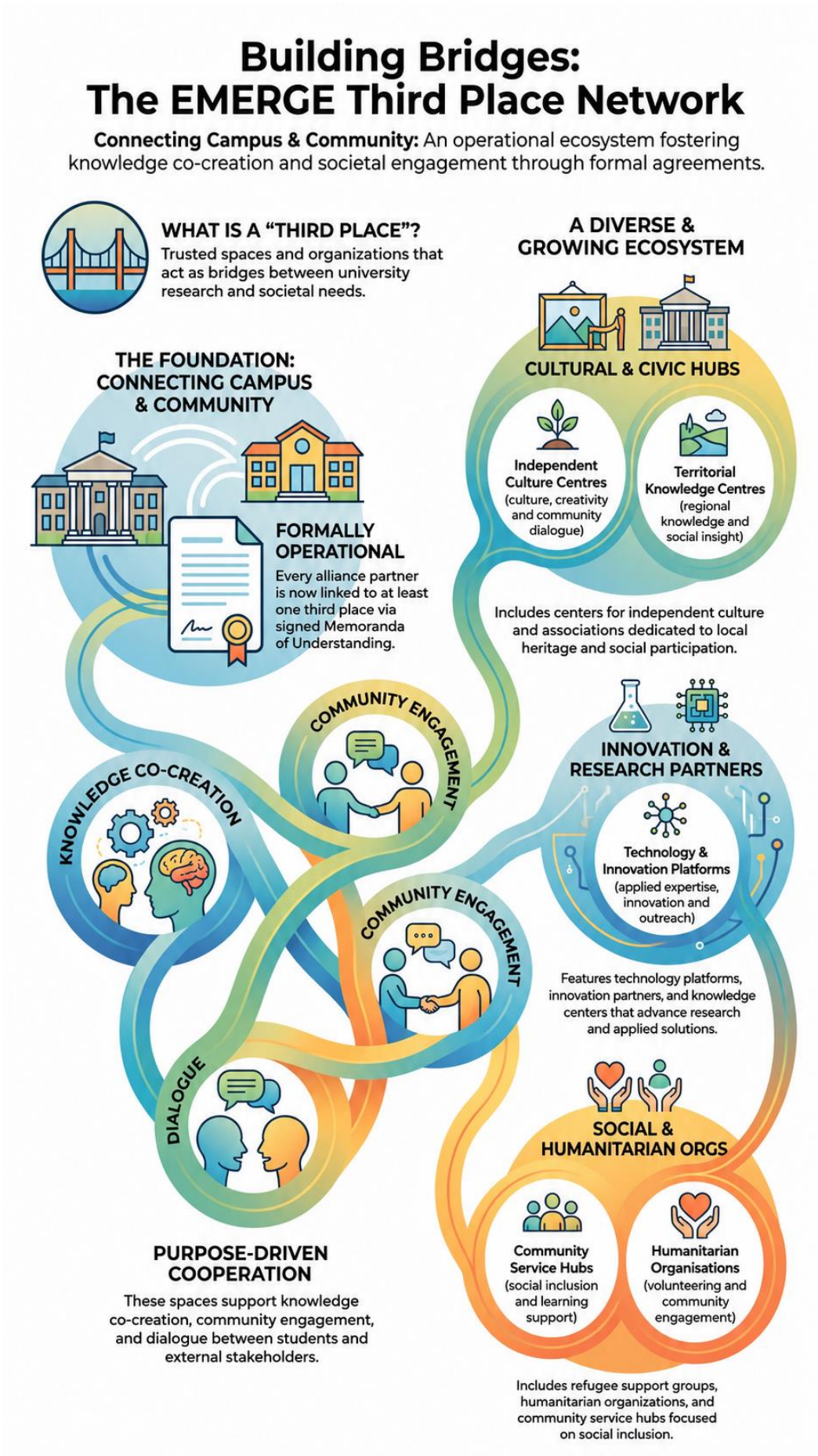
Civic engagement, culture, volunteering, and local collaboration.

SOCIAL & EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

Community services, schools, inclusion, and learning opportunities.

INNOVATION & PUBLIC-INTEREST PARTNERS

Healthcare, regional development, public institutions, sustainability, and cross-sector co-creation.


Building Bridges:
The EMERGE Third Place Network
Connecting Campus & Community: An operational ecosystem fostering knowledge co-creation and societal engagement through formal agreements.
WHAT IS A "THIRD PLACE"?
Trusted spaces and organizations that act as bridges between university research and societal needs.
A DIVERSE & GROWING ECOSYSTEM
CULTURAL & CIVIC HUBS
Independent Culture Centres (culture, creativity and community dialogue)
Territorial Knowledge Centres (regional knowledge and social insight)
Includes centers for independent culture and associations dedicated to local heritage and social participation.
THE FOUNDATION: CONNECTING CAMPUS & COMMUNITY
FORMALLY OPERATIONAL
Every alliance partner is now linked to at least one third place via signed Memoranda of Understanding.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
KNOWLEDGE CO-CREATION
INNOVATION & RESEARCH PARTNERS
Technology & Innovation Platforms (applied expertise, innovation and outreach)
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Features technology platforms, innovation partners, and knowledge centers that advance research and applied solutions.
DIALOGUE
SOCIAL & HUMANITARIAN ORGS
Community Service Hubs (social inclusion and learning support)
Humanitarian Organisations (volunteering and community engagement)
PURPOSE-DRIVEN COOPERATION
These spaces support knowledge co-creation, community engagement, and dialogue between students and external stakeholders.
Includes refugee support groups, humanitarian organizations, and community service hubs focused on social inclusion.

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UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

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