

# Developing International Links

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This document provides information and advice to any U3A in the UK that wishes to further international links with similar third age organisations around the world.

## Background

The International Committee (IC) was set up in 2015 by the Third Age Trust's National Executive Committee. Its objectives are:

- To promote knowledge of the international nature and spirit of the U3A movement.
- To work with the International Association of Universities of the Third Age (AIUTA), and other international Third Age bodies, to support the worldwide development of the U3A movement.
- To encourage visits, exchanges and twinning arrangements between U3As in the UK and those overseas and encourage attendance at international conferences and events.
- To provide help and advice to U3As and Networks on the development of international links.

## Establishing a link

The Third Age Trust is a member of AIUTA. Many types of international links can be established, either with an individual U3A, a Network or with a 'Federation' of U3As similar to The Third Age Trust.

An individual U3A or Network may wish to approach any U3A or equivalent organisation overseas to develop international links. A search on Google for 'U3A' in France, Italy Spain or Sweden will produce some results, but not all. The situation is made more difficult as internationally, many names are used to describe a third age organisation, e.g. U3A tends to designate an English speaking group, whereas UTA - Université du Troisième Age usually denotes a French speaking group.

A list of some international organisations can be found in the Appendix. As international third age organisations are generally not structured on the 'UK model' it may take some perseverance to find a suitable partner. However success can be a rewarding experience and well worth the effort.

Requests from overseas organisations to form links in the UK are often received via the U3A national website or the International Committee. These requests are passed to the appropriate U3A or Network.

All international links, visits and exchanges are unique. They should enhance your own U3A experience. Data protection means that contact information cannot be made freely available to all U3A members. Further information can be requested through the national web site. Follow the link in 'Members Area' Homepage – NEC –International or by email to [international@u3a.org.uk](mailto:international@u3a.org.uk).

## Types of International Links that a U3A may consider

### A Cultural Links

#### 1. Cultural Visits

A cultural visit is undertaken by individual U3As or Networks to a country of choice in order to learn and participate in its culture.

Examples are: architectural tours, wine tasting, classical tours.

##### Some items to consider

- *Using ATOL/ABTA registered companies.*
- *Personal Health Insurance (see Note below).*
- *Agree a programme between the hosting and participating U3As.*
- *Overseas visits for extended periods –members who wish to contact a local U3A e.g. English speaking U3As in Australia, Spain and France are advised to carry their U3A membership card. They are usually made very welcome.*

#### 2. Exchanges

An exchange of U3A members between countries is often hosted by local U3A members. At a later date the UK U3A hosts a reciprocal visit along the same lines. There are several ways of organising an exchange; much will depend on your U3A's individual geography and members. In all cases it is advisable to ensure that all participants are aware of the programme and of their obligations. All costs involved in exchanges are members' personal responsibility.

##### Some items to consider

- *Using an ATOL/ABTA registered company.*
- *Agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for those who wish to establish a more formal arrangement. A suitable template is available from the International Committee should you wish to use it.*
- *Funding –All funding is the responsibility of the U3A members involved. All expenditure and responsibility for payments must be detailed at the onset.*

*Items to include are:*

- *Transport – any mobility requirements? Use of member's cars.*
- *Expenses - travel, printing, postage, meals etc.*
- *Catering – including any dietary requirements.*
- *Insurance – see Note below.*
- *Next of kin cards - obtainable from National Office*

#### 3. Twinning

Twinning is an agreement between towns or boroughs to encourage educational and cultural interchange.

- *Some towns/boroughs have already negotiated a twinning arrangement. It may be possible to use the existing arrangement.*
- *Twinning arrangements between U3As are the remit of individual U3As.*

## **B Language Links**

The above cultural links may also include language links as part of their programme.

1. Written exchanges –e.g. exchange of emails, correspondence, newspapers, between individuals or groups.
  - *Consider setting up a pen friend group*
  - *Exchange your U3A newsletters.*
  - *Share local free newspapers and magazines.*
2. Conversation – via Skype/Face Time or other video conferencing software.
  - *Many video conferencing software packages are available free of charge.*
  - *Social media may also be considered.*
3. Language Exchange/Visit
  - *An exchange visit between U3A members whose purpose is to develop their language skills. Sometimes organised as total immersion in the culture and language of the country.*
  - *A visit or field trip designed to enable members to practise their language skill, while experiencing the local culture by touring cultural sites and conversing with the local community or local U3A members.*
4. Study Days/Summer schools.–Information available from the hosting country or U3A.
  - *Often incorporated into a visit or exchange. A visiting U3A is invited to attend a U3A or U3A Network study day or lecture.*
  - *Visiting U3As may be invited to contribute to a National or Regional summer school or Conference, Language Study day or U3A event.*

### **Note:**

In all cases, the implementation and organisation is the responsibility of the interested parties. All members MUST ensure that they are adequately insured. The Third Age Trust insurances are for third party liability only and do not protect members for personal, accident, health, or travel insurance. EHIC cards are currently valid on European visits and exchanges.

**Useful Links** The Appendix to this document contains a list of some useful web links to third age educational associations who may be suitable partners for a UK U3A. The list is not comprehensive; more detailed information may be available through the International Committee. email [international@u3a.org.uk](mailto:international@u3a.org.uk) or contact National Office.

### **Subject Advisers**

The language subject advisers are a valuable source of information. Their contact details are located on the national website <http://www.u3a.org.uk> and in every issue of Third Age Matters.

Follow the link in Members Area Homepage - Subject 'Advice - Language Advisers – General, - specific advisers for German French Latin and Russian

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APPENDIX – Associations of U3As or similar organisations

Country	Association	Web link	Notes
America	Lif's - American Life Long Learning Institute (Road Scholar) (The Elderhostel Institute Network) The Bernard Osher Foundation	<a href="http://www.roadsscholar.org/about/lifelong-learning-institutes">http://www.roadsscholar.org/about/lifelong-learning-institutes</a> <a href="http://www.osherfoundation.org/index.php?index">http://www.osherfoundation.org/index.php?index</a>	Many across America
Asia Pacific	Asia Pacific Alliance of Universities of The Third Age (APA)	<a href="http://www.u3a-asiapacificalliance.org">http://www.u3a-asiapacificalliance.org</a>	Countries in Asia Pacific
AUSTRALIA	U3A online Australia U3AAA – U3A Alliance Australia	<a href="http://www.u3aonline.org.au/">http://www.u3aonline.org.au/</a> <a href="http://u3aaa.org">http://u3aaa.org</a>	online courses and links to Australian U3As
EUROPE	EFOS European federation of older students	<a href="http://www.efos-europa.eu">http://www.efos-europa.eu</a>	
FINLAND	University of Helsinki and Eastern Finland, Jyväskylä, Oulu, Joensuu, Kuopio, Lapland, Seinäjoki, Tampere, Turku Vaasa	<a href="http://www.avoin.helsinki.fi/uta/Networks">http://www.avoin.helsinki.fi/uta/Networks</a> <a href="http://www.avoinliopisto.fi/en-GB/UTA">http://www.avoinliopisto.fi/en-GB/UTA</a>	member of AIUTA 1987–2008
FRANCE	AIUTA- International Association of Universities of the Third Age French Union of Universities of All Ages UTLs – University of Free Time (UTL)	<a href="http://aiu3a.com">http://aiu3a.com</a> <a href="http://www.ufuta.fr">http://www.ufuta.fr</a>	
INDIA	Network for U3As - Indian Society of U3As	search on 'Temps Libre +name' <a href="http://u3aindia.weebly.com">http://u3aindia.weebly.com</a>	individual and Institutional members
ITALY	UNITRE - University of the Third Age National Association	<a href="http://www.unitre-an.it">http://www.unitre-an.it</a> <a href="http://www.federuni.it">http://www.federuni.it</a>	250 U3As
LITHUANIA	Medardas Cobotas University of the Third Age (MCTAU) /	<a href="http://mctau.lt">http://mctau.lt</a>	Link to 24 U3As
NEW ZEALAND	A network of U3As around Christchurch	<a href="http://u3anetcant.nz/index.html?region=Canterbury&amp;group=Pegasus">http://u3anetcant.nz/index.html?region=Canterbury&amp;group=Pegasus</a> <a href="http://www.u3a.nz">http://www.u3a.nz</a>	Some Christchurch U3As All U3As in NZ
NORWAY	NZ U3A organisation Norway U3A organisation -links to senior universities in Norway	<a href="http://www.u3a.no">http://www.u3a.no</a>	Link to oU3As.
PORTUGAL	RUTIS – Official list of senior Universities in Portugal	<a href="http://rutises.wix.com/rutis">http://rutises.wix.com/rutis</a>	
SOUTH AFRICA	University of The Third Age South Africa South Africa association of Retired Persons SAAARP	<a href="https://sites.google.com/site/u3asafrika/">https://sites.google.com/site/u3asafrika/</a> <a href="http://saarp.net/en/">http://saarp.net/en/</a>	Link to 27 U3As
SWEDEN	Uppsala U3A -	<a href="http://www.usu.se">http://www.usu.se</a>	Links to 32 Swedish U3As
UK	The Third Age Trust	<a href="http://www.u3a.org.uk">http://www.u3a.org.uk</a>	Approx. 1000 U3As in UK
Worldwide	World U3A	<a href="http://www.worldu3a.org/">http://www.worldu3a.org/</a>	Free internet service
Worldwide	Association Internationale des Universités du Troisième Age (AIUTA)	<a href="http://www.aiu3a.com">http://www.aiu3a.com</a>	Based at Toulouse University

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