THE INTERNATIONAL U3A MOVEMENT

Ian McCannah
Chairman – International Committee, Third Age Trust

U3As around the World
U3As Around The World

- The "French Model"
  - The First U3A – Toulouse in 1973
  - Attached to Universities
  - Second Agers teach Third Agers
  - Tax payer funded
  - Some emphasis on research
  - the majority of U3As in Europe and in the non-English speaking world follow this model - in one form or other.

EUROPE

Netherlands Greece Ireland UK Luxemburg
Slovakia Hungary Italy Austria Switzerland Poland
Germany Portugal Lithuania Malta Spain
France Belgium Iceland Albania Belgium
Sweden Denmark Finland Bulgaria
U3As Around the World

• The "UK Model"
  • Cambridge in 1982
  • self help ethos - Third Agers learn from / teach to Third Agers
  • not attached to local universities / limited research
  • entirely membership funded
  • this model tends to be favoured by Commonwealth members - Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Cyprus, etc.

• ex-pat Spain. About 12 U3As exactly the same as those in the UK – U3A Javea, Costa Brava, Costa del Sol, Costa Blanca, Vall del Pop, Malaga, Marbella, etc.

Pay a visit!

International Organisations

• AIUTA – established in 1975 to promote the development of U3As internationally – two years after the first U3A was approved by Toulouse University. French Universities were given responsibility for providing life-long education by law in 1968.

• AIUTA's aim is to federate U3As across the world, including organisations with different names but similar objectives. There is an emphasis on research and twice yearly Conferences.

• Membership comprises several national associations. China's 60,000 U3As and 7 million members and the UK’s 1010 U3As and nearly 400,000 members are the most active.

• 40 other members from 30 countries.
International Organisations

• APA – ASIA PACIFIC ALLIANCE
• Members - India / Nepal / Australia / Singapore / Malaysia / Kazakhstan, etc
• Given vast distances, APA is an informal group of country representatives. All meetings are by teleconferencing. It has an on-line project called MYU3A – MYU3A.org
• U3aasiapacificalliance.org
• U3A ONLINE
• The world’s first virtual U3A delivering 60 online courses via the internet. Based in Australia but 1100 members worldwide – 60 from the UK.
• http://www.u3aonline.org.au

International Organisations

• World U3A
• A free internet service. Not a membership organisation.
• The emphasis is on online projects aimed at encouraging international Third Age understanding and contacts.
• There is a monthly magazine - "Signpost" with items about U3As around the world - www.worldu3a.org
THE TRUST'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

- Set up in Spring 2015 in order to:-
- promote awareness amongst U3As, in the UK, of the nature and spirit of the global Third Age movement.
- Promote the "UK Model" around the world.
- work with AIUTA, and other international "Third Age" bodies, to support the worldwide development of the Third Age movement.
- encourage visits, exchanges and twinning arrangements between U3As in the UK and those overseas, as well as attendance at International Conferences and Events.
- provide help and advice to U3As and Networks on the development of international links. Copy in your folder.
- Members – Jenny Carley (ex-Regional Trustee), Maria Chester (AIUTA Secretary General), Mike Head, Ian Funnell (ex-Regional Trustee and ex-Treasurer of AIUTA), Ian McCannah (Regional Trustee / IC Chair), Elizabeth Porter (Regional Trustee) and Heather Westrup (Languages Adviser)
- www.international@u3a.org.uk
LANGUAGE LINKS.

The benefits of these links are:

• the expansion of learning opportunities in your U3A
• the satisfaction of learning a new language
• greater understanding of the culture of other countries and making new contacts with overseas U3A members

By means of:

• reading foreign language newspapers / exchange of Newsletters
• e-mail / Skype / Social Media contact
• attending a Study Day or Summer School

Establishing an International Link

• Many types of international links can be established – architectural tours, wine tasting, language, twinning etc, by means of:-
• an individual U3A
• a Network
• Set up an Interest Group to develop International Links.
• Contact is made with an individual "U3A" overseas or a national federation of U3As, similar to the Trust
• a Google search for "U3A" in, for example, France, Italy, Spain or Sweden will produce some results BUT
• the term "U3A" is not universally used – in France it is known as UTA - Universite du Troisieme Age, Universite Permanente, etc Can be challenging but perseverance is rewarding!
• Language Subject Advisers – see TAM
• The International Committee has produced a list of some of these overseas U3As. However, many are not organised on the "UK Model".
Establishing an International Link

- The International Committee has produced an Advice Sheet - "Delivering International Links" covering the following points:-
  - Insurance
  - ATOL / ABTA
  - Reciprocity
  - Finances
  - Expenses
  - Memorandum of Understanding – more formal agreement. Template available from the IC.

All in the Committee Reference File and a copy is in your folder.
Shared Experiences

If you would like to share your international experience send a short summary to international@u3a.org.uk
Developing International Links

This document provides information and advice to any U3A in the UK wishing 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 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 or Network in a country 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... 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, exchanges are unique and should enhance your own U3A experience. Changing committee roles and data protection mean 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.
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 tour 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 a visit or 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 tour 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 – Funding can be from individual members, U3As, Networks or the Third Age Trust. All expenditure and responsibility for payments must be detailed at the outset.

   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 to encourage educational and cultural interchange.

   - Some towns 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 practice their language skill, at the same time 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 information may be available through the International Committee email international@u3a.org.uk or contact National Office.

**Subject Advisers**
The Language advisers are a valuable source of information. Their contact details are located on the National website [http://www.u3a.org.uk](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

8th December 2016
## APPENDIX

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