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Northumbria staff and students ‘impress’ in the Ukraine

A team of Northumbria staff and students recently attended a national event in Kiev to mark the culmination of the three-year IMPRESS project.

Led by Northumbria’s [Professor Rebecca Strachan](#), Associate Dean (Business and Engagement) in Engineering and Environment, the IMPRESS project was designed to modernise student services across the Ukraine. Funded by EU Tempus, the project drew on Northumbria’s expertise in providing an outstanding student experience and focussed on four main areas: student recruitment, student placement, development of soft skills and student-led

initiatives.

Professor Strachan said: “It was fantastic to be part of the National Student Event hosted by Taras Shevchenko National University of Kiev. This was the culmination of our IMPRESS project and saw our group meet and work with students from universities across Ukraine.

“These students were all excellent ambassadors for their universities and were keen to engage and debate with each other and the project team during the two-day event. We provided them with the key outputs from our EU Tempus-funded IMPRESS project, focussed on improving the student experience and student services in Ukraine by supporting them throughout their student journey at university from recruitment to their future careers. We were able to showcase our work on recruitment, development of soft skills, and an online system for placements.

“Our Northumbria Students’ Union team shared their approach here in Newcastle, generating considerable interest and questions from the conference attendees. Students discussed key aspects of student representation, policy development, structure of student unions and student societies in the Ukraine and explored how to take these forward and build on the work of the project.

“It has been very rewarding being part of this three-year project working with four of the leading universities in the Ukraine and other European partners to transform the student experience and now being able to work with students and the Ministry of Science and Education to see how those initiatives can be rolled out further across Ukrainian higher education. I welcome the announcement at the event of the National Student Centre in Kiev, an exciting development providing the opportunity for Ukraine to adopt a more student centred approach to Higher Education.”

Professor Strachan and her colleagues were joined by Northumbria Students’ Union president Adam Crawley, Joe Holt, Vice President – Academic, and Matthew Auden, Vice President – Welfare.

Joe said: “Adam, Matt and I travelled to Ukraine as part of a EU Tempus funded IMPRESS project hosted at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kiev. Our role in the project was to deliver a session on the role of Students’ Unions in the UK and how we contribute to the wider student

experience, mainly focussing on the societies and volunteering opportunities we offer, and the role they play in student life.

“Alongside this, we also helped facilitate a number of seminars and partook in a panel discussion at the end of the conference. It was an amazing opportunity to travel to another country to share our work and practices with so many enthusiastic and inquisitive students, and we found the whole experience thoroughly enjoyable, particularly having a taste of what student life is like in Ukraine.”

Further information about the project can be found at: www.impress-eu.com. Northumbria was recently rated Top 20 in the UK for student experience in the Times Higher Student Experience Survey and was also ranked 3rd in the UK for the satisfaction of our internal students in the International Student Barometer (ISB Summer 2015). To find out more about studying at Northumbria go to: www.northumbria.ac.uk or sign up for one of our upcoming Open Days.

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

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Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences

rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk

07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences

andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk

07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk

07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact

Student Communications Manager

james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk