The Compostela Group of Universities (CGU) took its first steps in 1994 and has grown in size over the years, with pilgrims from more than 60 universities across the world having since joined our non-profit international higher education association. Acting as a crossroads for all them, the CGU has become one of the largest such networks in Europe.

The CGU is the dean of the international networks of universities with a global scope based in Spain.
The Compostela Group of Universities welcomes you to its travel journal, which features the most notable experiences and activities of the last year and also contains notes on the exciting adventures to come in the year ahead. The way is long, so buen camino!

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EXPERIENCES along the way
The University of Salamanca is celebrating the eighth centenary of its foundation, and the CGU is playing its part in the celebrations by holding its general assembly at this member university. Both institutions share the same commitment to casting a light on the past and looking towards the future by promoting heritage and supporting innovation.

This year, the CGU has devoted a large part of its efforts to enhancing the value of the tangible and intangible heritage of the Camino de Santiago. As well as highlighting its role as a vehicle for European culture at the International Seminar on the Camino de Santiago and Europe, the CGU has brought the Camino closer to the academic community by organising the First International University Forum: The Value of Human Rights on the Camino de Santiago, which brought together more than 100 students and representatives of international institutions in Santiago de Compostela. Thanks to this initiative, the rectors and representatives of the 19 participating universities signalled their commitment to sustainable development goals by signing a declaration.

The organisation of these activities has been made possible by the signing of collaboration agreements with institutions that share the CGU’s values of solidarity and cooperation.

These new initiatives are complemented by ongoing contests and mobility programmes, which have seen a significant increase in the participation of member universities. In 2018, more than 100 applications were received for the STELLA mobility programmes, while the contests attracted more than 30 videos. You can find more detailed information on the activities and initiatives that the CGU has engaged in throughout 2018 in the pages of this Annual Report.

Having summarised this year up, the time has come to look to the future, as I indicated at the beginning of this message. The 25th anniversary of the foundation of the Compostela Group of Universities and our next elections will be on our horizon in 2019. We look forward to your active participation in our initiatives.

Marek Kręglewski
PRESIDENT OF THE COMPOSTELA GROUP OF UNIVERSITIES

For me, the year’s most outstanding event was the First International University Forum, which proved a very memorable experience for all the participants. The 25th anniversary of the foundation of the Compostela Group of Universities and our next elections will be on our horizon in 2019. We look forward to your active participation in our initiatives.

Inmaculada Fortanet
Ann Langenakens
Antonio López Díaz
Carina Eriksson

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The metaphor that comes to mind when summing up the past year with the Compostela network is an amazingly colourful garden with plenty of strong-growing flowers. The year has been dynamic, creative and multi-faceted.
QUOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Carla Martins
The Compostela Group of Universities comprises a vibrant group of universities from around the world and provides a platform for the fruitful interchange of ideas, experiences and expertise in education and research, thus promoting the international profile of its members.

Jan Pavlik
In a world in which economic and political turmoil has almost become the norm, it comes as a great relief to see that universities and their staff – both academic and non-academic, and from South America to East Asia – are always ready to open up interesting possibilities for new generations of students and to help them – without prejudice and to the best of their knowledge and ability – prepare for the challenges of the future.

Jean-Pierre Roose
Representing the Compostela Group of Universities in Brussels is always gratifying, as it allows me to keep in touch with the secretariat and be in direct contact with other networks.

Juan Francisco García Marín
"If you want to go far, go with others." Being part of the CGU reinforces your international visibility and provides you with the opportunity to build bridges of cooperation with partners throughout the world. In our case, it has highly contributed to our continued adaptation to educational and societal needs in a creative and innovative way.

Manuel Freire-Garabal
For nearly 25 years now, the Compostela Group of Universities has served to strengthen the universal dimension of higher education, thanks in part to the inspiring force of the Camino de Santiago.

Maurits van Rooijen
Looking back at 2017/18, it has been special on a personal level because my dear colleague honoured me with the Compostela Golden Pin at the last CGU General Assembly in Pécs, Hungary. I appreciated that gesture very much. May the Compostela Group of Universities prosper for many years to come.

Slavomir Rudenko
As an inclusive university network, the Compostela Group has embraced a more global membership approach by extending its membership structure to include more countries and regions of the world than ever before. In this regard, the CGU aims to become a significant university cooperation platform worldwide.

Thomas Buntru
The Compostela Group of Universities is a very dynamic association that – with its many and varied activities, programmes, and projects – is an essential part of UDEM’s international network. Being a member of the CGU is like belonging to one big happy family.
How was your experience in your first year as part of the Compostela Group of Universities? That is the question we put to the universities that joined us last year.

It is a great honour for me to be a member of the Compostela Group of Universities. I greatly appreciate it. Our university has been a member of this group for just a year now. Last year we sent our colleague to the General Assembly, where he made some very interesting contacts with the representatives of various universities. In the future, I can see us being more actively involved in a range of activities. I wish the CGU every success.

On my first meeting, I had the opportunity to join a large community of well-reputed institutions covering two continents and rich in values. In the years to come, I hope to participate proactively in the CGU’s projects and activities, especially those addressing global challenges, and to help promote its visibility and international leadership.

Mamuka Tavkhelidze
RECTOR OF GRIGOL ROBAKIDZE UNIVERSITY

Miguel Ángel Castro Arroyo
RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SEVILLE
The Compostela Group of Universities brings together 73 members from 27 different countries, sharing the path to knowledge and the goal of improving higher education for a better society.
Delegates play a relevant role by acting as the main executive nexus between the university community and the CGU. They facilitate the flow of information, foster the participation of their universities in the activities and identify new horizons of collaboration.
SHARED experiences
WITH STUDENTS

Stella Junior

The Compostela Group of Universities aims to promote and enable mobility and training for students from its member universities through the STELLA Junior programme.

In 2018, the CGU will award six STELLA Junior grants.

Last year, Alberto Medrano Samperio went to the Technical University of Madrid (UPM) thanks to STELLA Junior. Find out what he had to say about the experience:

“My experience as an intern at the UPM’s Erasmus International Mobility Office was excellent. Right from day one my team helped me with any doubts I had, and it was a pleasant and friendly environment to work in.

I feel very grateful for this experience, which has allowed me to meet some really great people and to learn new things that will enable me to do this type of work in the future. I have also had the opportunity to get to know Spanish culture.”

VII Video Contest

We believe in giving students opportunities to improve their education and skills through our mobility programs. We also reward their talent through our contests.

A contest created to recognise the creativity and originality of CGU students and encourage them to work with new technologies while developing a broader professional background.

In response to the 2018 call, students from ten member universities submitted 16 videos.

1ST PRIZE

Pilgrim Voices of Santiago, submitted by Horalia Lizette Vázquez Valdivia from the University of Guadalajara (Mexico), shows how a place can provide a focal point for cultural diversity, a place where people of different nationalities can come together in pilgrimage.

2ND PRIZE

Union is Strength, by fellow University of Guadalajara students Esmeralda Consuelo García Chavira and Angel Enrique Rodríguez Rivera, was inspired by the reaction of university students and the nation of Mexico as a whole to the earthquake of September 2017.

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XXII International Prize Grupo Compostela – Xunta de Galicia

The XXII International Prize Grupo Compostela – Xunta de Galicia was awarded to Professor María Pilar Alonso Abad for her contribution to the dissemination of the values of the Way of St James and her unique research on its cultural heritage.

Find out more about the researcher and academic in this brief interview.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE THE YOUNGEST RECIPIENT OF THE AWARD?

It is a privilege and an honour to be recognised with a prize that has been awarded to public figures, people, and institutions in the fields of science, literature, communications, jurisprudence and politics. It is both a great honour and a responsibility for me to be joining this group, and it will encourage me to continue with my research and to keep spreading the word about the heritage of the Camino de Santiago and its values.

HOW DID THE IDEA OF RESEARCHING THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO COME ABOUT?

I am from Burgos and I have always been interested in knowing everything about the Camino. I have always been struck by how its heritage, which –like all works of art– is a dream come true, gives shape in some way to what history represents, to the culture of the Camino de Santiago and, above all, its values.

I believe that when it comes to the Camino we should distinguish between its tangible heritage and its values, that is to say, its human heritage, which comes from all the people who have walked the route, got to know it, and have learned about its values. Wherever they go, their values go with them.

This living heritage has continued throughout history. I believe that this is the only route in history that has stayed alive and that we must learn from it, from all the values it embodies.

AS A PROFESSOR, HOW DO YOU ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENTS TO PRESERVE HERITAGE?

I believe that it is important to highlight the importance of this heritage, how it was built, and the values it embodies. It is often the case that we do not value heritage in its rightful measure. It is vital, therefore, that both students and society as a whole are aware of its importance. Knowledge is what moves us to preserve the Camino and spread the word about it.

In my opinion, the first step would be to know our heritage and its characteristics in full. It is up to us to manage it properly so that we can pass it on to future generations.
II Research Pitches Contest

This contest seeks to contribute to the policies of universities by aiding the dissemination of research results and promoting the research carried out by member universities.

In 2018, researchers from seven member universities presented a total of 19 pitches.

1ST PRIZE
Presented by the researcher Alberte Regueira López of the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain).

Modelling the production of high value-added biobased products focuses on modelling bacterial communities that are capable of transforming organic waste into high value-added bioproducts, such as bioplastics or biolubricants.

2ND PRIZE
The objective of the research conducted by Ali Salem of the University of Pécs (Hungary), who submitted the pitch Crystals: The path towards better drugs, is to combine drugs in a crystalline form, make drugs more water soluble, and decrease side effects.

3RD PRIZE
Presented by researchera Ana Maria Sánchez-Pérez from Jaume I University (Spain), Transforming viruses to study cells explains how, though the study of DNA and its manipulation, viruses can become allies in research, knowledge generation, and even in the fight against disease.

Stella for Staff

The aim of this programme is to provide opportunities for administrative staff mobility and to enhance cross-cultural experiences and work experience through two-week work placements at member universities of the CGU.

In 2018, 18 administrative staff were selected from the 117 grant applications submitted and enjoyed a professional and cultural experience.

CLARITY WHITE, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA, WHO VISITED KARLSTAD UNIVERSITY

The programme was a really fabulous experience. It was an opportunity that helped me to learn about how other departments function. It was eye-opening for cultural reasons and for general work-related ideas. I was able to identify things I would like to explore doing differently at my office.

ANA CARLOTA MUÑIZ, CETYS UNIVERSITY, WHO VISITED ADAM MICKIEWICZ UNIVERSITY

This experience has given me the opportunity to understand the context of the university without borders, allowing me to obtain a point of reference in the activities we engage in, not only in my area of expertise but as a whole. It widens the participants’ perspectives, so we can make comparisons that help us understand what we are doing right, what we can do better, and how this can be achieved.
With the aim of fostering cooperation and promoting dialogue between higher education institutions, the University of Guadalajara (Mexico) will host the XXV General Assembly of the Compostela Group of Universities. For the first time in the history of the CGU, this great event will be held in Guadalajara (Mexico) in June 2019.

The University of Guadalajara is a public and autonomous university system in the Mexican state of Jalisco that combines an international scope and vision with a strong commitment to society. The university’s high school, undergraduate, graduate and research programmes are designed to promote a sustainable and inclusive social development.

The CGU General Assembly in Guadalajara will see participants analyse the role of higher education institutions as key players in the internationalisation of cities. This space for reflection will also promote the development of new inter-university collaboration projects and the exchange of good practices.
COMPANIONS
on the way...
Along the way we have met with associations and institutions that share our values and objectives and with whom we have signed agreements that allow us to join forces to achieve them.

**FOUNDATION TRASLATIO**

Foundation Tradatio and the CGU signed a framework agreement setting out the terms for their collaboration in developing activities and joint academic, cultural and social programmes relating to the Camino de Santiago.

Foundation Tradatio was created in 2016 by the Asociación de Amigos de la Ruta Marítima del Apóstol Santiago a Galicia with the aim of walking, every year, the pilgrim route on which the remains of St James the Apostle were taken from the north of Portugal to Galicia.

**EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF SAINT-JAMES WAY**

The CGU and the European Federation of Saint-James Way signed an agreement governing their collaboration in developing activities and joint academic, social and cultural programmes relating to the Camino de Santiago.

The European Federation of Saint-James Way is a non-profit association whose main objective is to bring together authorities in the regions situated along the Camino de Santiago in Europe in a bid to promote the Way.

**AGREEMENTS**

The President of Foundation Tradatio, Mario Cardama Barrientos, and the President of the Compostela Group of Universities, Marek Kręglewski.

**HELSINKI ESPAÑA - UNIVERSITY NETWORK**

The CGU and the Helsinki España - University Network signed a specific collaboration agreement for the organisation of the First International University Forum: The Value of Human Rights on the Camino de Santiago: harnessing the power of tourism to promote cross-cultural dialogue and achieve the sustainable development goals.

**AGREEMENTS**

The President of Foundation Tradatio, Mario Cardama Barrientos, and the President of the Compostela Group of Universities, Marek Kręglewski.
In collaboration with the Association for the Promotion of University Studies in Central Sardinia (Italy), the CGU will take part in the Research, Sustainable Economy, Tourism and Environment for Territorial Reactivation (RESTART) project. The objective is to create a regional centre of competence where studies, analyses and diagnoses of the territories in question will be carried out.

The aim of the HousErasmus+ project was to study housing problems addressed as part of the Erasmus+ programmes and to streamline policy recommendations. The research report, recommendations, and best practices booklet were published in October 2017 thanks to the research and study visits carried out as part of the project. To read the documents go to: https://houserasmus.eu.

The CGU is an associate partner in the dissemination of the project and its results. If you are interested in using the project’s software at your university, go to: www.erasmuswithoutpaper.eu.

The Compostela Group of Universities plays an active role in various European Commission projects. Last year it was involved in five projects and helped submit seven proposals.

The EVALUATE project provides a framework in which trainee teachers in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) can engage in telecollaborative exchanges with fellow trainees in other locations. These exchanges will be evaluated. If found to be effective, steps will be taken to upscale and integrate collaborative learning into ITE. The mid-term report was presented to the European Commission, and the evaluation was quite positive.

The preliminary results of the first round of exchanges were presented at the third project meeting in July, while the pathway was set for the upscaling phase and the final conference.

The CGU is part of the project consortium and heads up the quality control team. To find out more about EVALUATE’s success stories go to www.evaluateproject.eu.

The final report has been submitted to the European Commission and we are waiting for their evaluation.

The main aim of the follow-up project is to move from a proof of concept to a network open to all universities. More attention is being given to support and to universities that do not have IT-solutions. By the project’s end in 2019, EWP will be ready to cater for all Erasmus Charter holders in enabling a digital workflow for the next Erasmus programme.

The CGU is an associate partner in the dissemination of the project and its results. If you are interested in using the project’s software at your university, go to: www.erasmuswithoutpaper.eu.
International Seminar on the Camino de Santiago and Europe

In collaboration with the CGU, the Chair of Camino de Santiago and Pilgrimage organised the International Seminar on the Camino de Santiago and Europe on 23-25 October 2017 at the University of Santiago de Compostela.

This international seminar was part of the programme of activities organised by the Xunta de Galicia to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Declaration of Santiago de Compostela, which designated the Camino de Santiago as the first cultural route of the Council of Europe.

More than 50 international experts and students attended a series of lectures and debates that addressed the legal, social and cultural aspects of the Camino. A total of 11 scholarships were awarded to cover the costs of accommodation and meals for participants who did not live in Santiago de Compostela.

TIGRIS

The main objective of the Transfer of Good Practices and Reinforcement of Internationalisation Strategies in Kurdistan (TIGRIS) project is to work on three different levels—institutional, national and international—in supporting the modernisation, accessibility, and internationalisation of higher education in Kurdistan. As an associate partner, the CGU will assist with the dissemination of the project and its results.

CALOHEE

The Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe (CALOHEE) project aims to develop the infrastructure that will eventually make it possible to compare the performance of students enrolled in higher education around Europe and across a range of fields, thereby meeting the needs of the various stakeholders in the European higher education community.

The CGU played an advisory and supportive role from the start of the project through to its completion in April 2018. To learn more go to: www.calohee.eu.

GALEUROPA

The Compostela Group of Universities is one of the associations that will organise and support transnational youth mobility within the framework of the Galeuropa 2018 programme, co-financed by the Youth Employment Initiative and the European Social Fund.

The programme gives young people from Galicia the opportunity to do voluntary internships at companies and public or private entities elsewhere in Europe. At the end of the mobility period, beneficiaries will receive a certificate confirming their experience in non-formal youth education.

The CGU will manage the mobility of 15 young people in the United Kingdom, Italy and Portugal.
13 COUNTRIES PARTICIPATED

As part of the International University Forum, the rectors and representatives of 20 universities and international institutions signed a declaration in which they pledged their commitment to working towards the sustainable development goals, protecting human rights, and promoting a tourism model that contributes to economic growth, inclusive development, and environmental sustainability.

PARTICIPANT UNIVERSITIES

Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland)
University of Lima (Peru)
University of A Coruña (Spain)
University of Monterrey (Mexico)
Jaume I University (Spain)
IESIDE Business Institute (Spain)
University of Minho (Portugal)
Ahfad University for Women (Sudan)
University of Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne (France)
University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain)
Complutense University of Madrid (Spain)
Hospitality Business School Saxion (Netherlands)
University of Donja Gorica (Montenegro)
Copenhagen Business School (Denmark)
Fordham University (United States of America)
Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium)
Oklahoma University (United States of America)
Tulsa Community College (United States of America)

First international University Forum: The Value of Human Rights on the Camino de Santiago: harnessing the power of tourism to promote cross-cultural dialogue and achieve the sustainable development goals

Held on 17–23 March, this international university project brought together representatives of universities from three continents to walk the Camino de Santiago and take part in the International University Forum in the capital of Galicia. Before heading to Santiago de Compostela, the participating students took an online course covering topics such as human rights, sustainable tourism, the Camino de Santiago, and sustainable development goals. Following the welcome ceremony in Santiago, students and professors were divided into four groups and completed 100 kilometres of the Camino de Santiago. On returning to the city with a rucksack full of experiences, they attended the International University Forum, which brought together more than 100 international students, with some 20 universities from 13 countries taking part.
Those who did not have the opportunity to attend the opening of the International Seminar on the Camino de Santiago and Europe in October 2017 will now have the chance to read the intervention of the awardee of the XXI International Prize Grupo Compostela – Xunta de Galicia, Marcelino Oreja Aguirre. An intervention linked to the 30th anniversary of the Declaration of Santiago de Compostela, which designated the Camino de Santiago as the first cultural route of the Council of Europe.
Academic initiatives

Grouping all Camino de Santiago initiatives under one umbrella

The Compostela Academy on the Camino was founded to provide a home for all the CGU’s initiatives. In view of the wide variety of CGU initiatives focusing on the pilgrimage route and the fact that they are aimed at different audiences, we decided to create a programme to promote the statutory objectives of the CGU as well as knowledge of the Camino de Santiago and its capacity to bring about change on a social and university level.

International University Meeting Sustainable Development Goals in Higher Education

This university meeting will bring together international experts, academic representatives and students from four continents. Organised by the CGU, the event will comprise three phases: a course and debate; a walk along a 100-kilometre section of the Camino de Santiago; and the International University Meeting. Scholarships will be available for participants wishing to take part in the event.

STEPPING UP OUR SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

The Research Pitch Contest was founded in 2016 to promote the dissemination of research results and the research conducted by member universities. In continuing to pursue these goals, through the Compostela Academy on the Camino, the CGU will set up a new programme for professors and researchers to encourage their mobility in the network of member universities. A single call will be made for this inaugural edition, and only European exchanges will be eligible.

The European Year of Cultural Heritage and Camino de Santiago Seminar

The CGU and the Chair of Camino de Santiago and Pilgrimage will join the celebrations of the European Year of Cultural Heritage by making this theme the central topic of their second joint seminar. The event, to be held at the University of Santiago on 23–25 October, will feature lectures on heritage, history, art, cultural routes, and law. Attendees will also have the opportunity to walk 10 kilometres of the Portuguese Route of the Camino de Santiago.

Scholarships will be available for participants wishing to take part in the event.
In representing the CGU as its ambassadors in recent years, the members of the Executive Committee have carried out some particularly fruitful work. The XXIV General Assembly saw six new member universities join the CGU, while seven universities have submitted applications to become part of our network in 2018.

COMPOSTELA DINNER
This event will see all the representatives of the member universities gather for a meal.

UNIVERSITIES COMPOSTELAM
The aim of this initiative is to encourage people to visit the exhibitions of member universities so that they can complete their ‘pilgrim passport’. Pilgrims who complete their passports will take part in a prize draw.

Developing a new corporate identity
The Compostela Group of Universities continues to work on the gradual introduction of a new corporate identity that is more in keeping with the times—a fresh identity that projects a more humanistic approach. The logo has been updated and a new corporate identity manual created, which will be made available to member universities on our website.

The CGU will also work hard in revamping its website, creating an attractive design and organising information in such a way as to make it more accessible for users.
CELEBRATING THE XXV ANNIVERSARY OF THE CGU

2019 will mark the XXV anniversary of the foundation of the CGU, an occasion we cannot fail to celebrate. We will be organising an event to commemorate this milestone.

A FUN WAY TO GET TO KNOW THE CGU

COMPOSloto was founded in 2017 as a challenge for participants at the General Assembly in Pécs, Hungary. This initiative was set up at the General Assembly held at the University of Salamanca with a view to letting participants find out more about the network, the Camino de Santiago, and the host institution.
BENEFITS OF BEING A CGU’S PILGRIM

• Worldwide recognition and visibility through CGU’s communications channels.
• Benefit from special conditions due to CGU’s connections with official institutions, networks and enterprises.
• Exchange of good practices and access to training and professional development programmes.
• Access to an extensive and diverse database of universities.
• Being part of an international community that cooperates in the organisation of European Commission projects and CGU activities.

DO YOU WANT TO JOIN US?

First, you have to decide which type of membership suits your organisation:

• Full membership for Higher Education institutions.
• Associate membership for enterprises, publishing houses and other commercial organisations.
• Collaborative membership for institutions and other not-for-profit organisations related to or interested in Higher Education.

Next, follow these simple steps:

• Fill the documents according to the type of membership you have chosen.
• The Rector or Senior Executive of your organisation must sign and stamp the application form. This application must be sent by ordinary post to the Secretariat of the Group along with the followings items: a written request to the President of the Group and a presentation of your organisation.

Visit our website to find more information about how to become a member!
compostela grup of universities

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