

## PRESS RELEASE

### **From Artificial Intelligence to Citizen Science: UNITUS Showcases Its Experience at the International Staff Week 2026**

VITERBO – The University of Tuscia (UNITUS) played a leading role in the 7th International Staff Week, dedicated to Artificial Intelligence, Inclusion, and Sustainability in Higher Education, by presenting its experience developed within Transnational Education (TNE) projects funded by Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR).

During the event, Giorgio Scavino presented the University's contribution to the development of innovative digital tools and artificial intelligence applications supporting international academic cooperation, with a presentation entitled *“From AI-Powered Learning to Citizen Observatories: Building Shared Knowledge Ecosystems through Transnational Education.”*

The presentation highlighted how Transnational Education is evolving from a traditional instrument of international mobility into a genuine shared knowledge ecosystem, capable of integrating education, technological innovation, cultural heritage, and community engagement.

Through the TNE IMPACT, TNE GPS – Green & Pink for Sustainable Education, and TNE Moving Italianness projects, the University of Tuscia has collaborated with numerous academic partners across Latin America, North Africa, and Southeast Asia in the joint design of educational activities, innovative learning pathways, and digital learning environments.

Among the initiatives presented, particular attention was devoted to the AI-based application “Scenari Italiani,” developed by the University for Foreigners of Perugia within the TNE IMPACT project, coordinated by Roma Tre University. The tool enables students to learn the Italian language through the creation of personalised narratives, integrating language learning, cultural content, personal memory, and immersive experience, in an approach that makes the learning process more engaging, participatory, and meaningful.

The presentation also illustrated the potential of the GREENGAGE participatory platform, originally developed within a European project and currently being piloted at the University of Tuscia to support active citizen participation in the collection and sharing of information related to the environment, territories, and sustainability. Through surveys, georeferenced observations, and collaborative processes, the app enables participants to directly contribute to knowledge creation, transforming them from passive recipients of information into active contributors to research and monitoring processes.

Within this framework, a future vision of a “UNITUS Citizen Observatory for Cultural and Natural Heritage” was presented, a participatory observatory dedicated to cultural and natural heritage, biodiversity, landscapes, and sustainability, capable of connecting research, teaching, university museums, and local communities.

The testing and experimentation activities of the GREENGAGE platform at the University of Tuscia are conducted with the scientific contribution of Professor Paola Pogliani, researcher in Museology, Art Criticism, and Restoration, and with the voluntary collaboration of ECOINSPIRE LAB ETS, which ensures the full operability and usability of the GREENGAGE application in Italy,

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guaranteeing the continuity of activities and services developed within the framework of the European project of the same name.

The experience was also presented during the final conference of the TNE IMPACT project as an example of good practice in participatory mapping, showcasing activities carried out in the Turano Valley through the “Turano Archaeo Survey” campaign. The initiative was developed in collaboration with the University of Durham, Poleis S.c.a.r.l., and the RiAttivati Youth Cultural Association within the PNR project “United Villages for the Cultural and Social Regeneration of the Turano Valley.”

The initiative represents a concrete opportunity to experiment with innovative Citizen Science models applied to cultural and natural heritage, fostering the active participation of students, academic staff, researchers, citizens, civil society organisations, and local administrators in the co-production of knowledge and the sustainable enhancement of territories.

*““Our experience in Transnational Education projects shows that innovation is not only about introducing new technologies, but about creating meaningful connections between people, territories, and knowledge,” said Giorgio Scavino. “Through artificial intelligence tools, collaborative digital environments, and participatory approaches inspired by Citizen Science, we are experimenting with new models of learning and international cooperation. The initiatives developed within the TNE IMPACT, TNE GPS Education, and TNE Moving Italianness projects show how education can become a shared space where students, academics, researchers, and citizens jointly contribute to knowledge creation. In this perspective, artificial intelligence does not replace human experience; rather, it becomes a tool that facilitates dialogue across cultures, disciplines, and communities. Our goal is not merely to develop innovative digital tools, but to build open and inclusive educational ecosystems where learning, participation, and contribution become part of a single process of collective growth.”*

Particular relevance was also attributed to the potential of the GREENGAGE platform as a tool for community engagement and participation. As highlighted during the presentation, “The real innovation of GREENGAGE does not lie solely in the technology itself, but in its ability to connect people, places, and knowledge. By enabling citizens, students, and researchers to share observations and reflections, the platform fosters the co-creation of knowledge and promotes a culture of active participation, environmental awareness, and shared responsibility for local heritage and sustainability.”

Participation in the International Staff Week provided an important opportunity for exchange with academic and administrative staff from numerous international universities, further confirming the University of Tuscia’s commitment to promoting innovative higher education models and building global networks capable of generating educational, social, and cultural impact.

Special thanks were extended to the scientific coordinators of the TNE projects that made these initiatives possible: **Professor Simone Severini** for the TNE IMPACT project, **Professor Stefano Speranza** for the TNE Moving Italianness project, and **Professor Alessandro Fusi** for the TNE GPS – Green & Pink for Sustainable Education project. Their scientific and organisational contribution has been essential in strengthening the University’s international cooperation activities and expanding academic networks within the framework of Transnational Education.

Through its TNE initiatives, the University of Tuscia continues to invest in the digital transformation of higher education, the enhancement of Italy’s cultural and scientific heritage, and the development

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of new forms of international collaboration, contributing to strengthening the role of the Italian higher education system on the global stage.



*Photo: Giorgio Scavino during his presentation.*

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