

# vals

Virtual alliances  
for learning  
society

## What is vals?

*The motivation behind the VALS project* has its origin in a need, shared by all partners, to **forge greatly improved links between higher education students and their teachers, and on the other hand the businesses where those students will find employment.** However, mobility of students in company placements and internships relies heavily on local connections and are often restricted by high costs of relocation and living expenses. Large sectors of the European economy are now mediated by online communications and collaboration. Hence, the **VALS proposed solution is to create virtual placements.** These will make use of the technology which drives the professional environment to organise and carry out placements.

To accomplish this, **VALS will build knowledge partnerships between higher education students and companies** who will work together on **resolving authentic business problems through open innovation.** This approach will allow VALS to leverage virtual placements of students in companies in order to foster entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and to **make use of the results to establish new learning and teaching methods.**

## Core Objectives

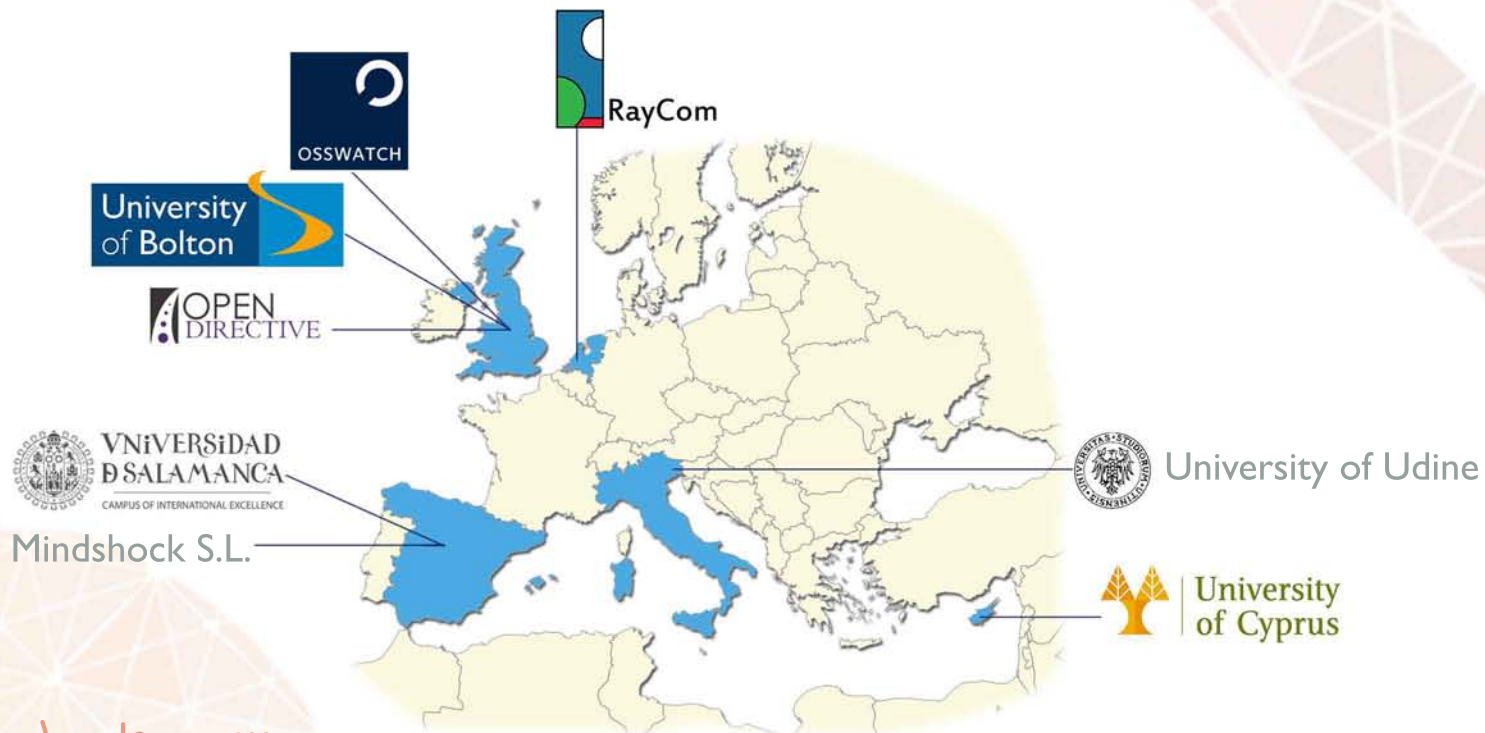
- Create an **OSS Education Process methodology and guidelines**, articulating the collaboration and providing assistance **on student engagement with real industry projects.**
- Generate **awareness in industry and education of the opportunities** presented by collaboration with student software developers.
- Establish an **online system to manage virtual placements for student developers to work on real-world business problems**, with appropriate mentoring, as with the **successful example of Google Summer of Code.**
- Run a **pilot programme**, open to non-partners and **evaluate the results** of the pilot.
- **Establish long-term** alliances between universities and companies in open-source and thus initiate **mainstreaming of the project approach.**

## Semester of Code

Semester of Code is the pilot programme of the European VALS project, which allows computer science students to address real business problems raised by companies and rewards the students for resolving these problems reflected in their formal education. Hence, students will be able to gain real-world experience while making valuable contributions to industry projects.



# Involved Partners



## vals will ...

- Provide the methods, practices, documentation and infrastructure to unlock the potential of open source software as enabling technology through virtual placements in businesses and other public and private bodies
- Pilot and promote this as the “Semester of Code”



With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union

## More Information?



For more information on VALS visit:

<http://virtualalliances.eu/>



For more information on the Semester of Code pilot visit:

<http://semesterofcode.com/>

