

## MEMBER MAGAZINE

Discussing international education

## LEADERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

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"Associate deans should, at the very least, be given as much administrative support as possible, the visibility and authority to make decisions and, most importantly, the active backing of their leaders and peers."

LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE: ASSOCIATE DEANS AND INTERNATIONALISATION

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"Of course, I do not only teach leadership, but I am also a leader and a manager; I believe that to be successful, you must be both."

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"Combining technical tools and soft skills, the course prepares them to understand the complexities of the French higher education system. These students are ready to *become wind*."

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"In the past, I used to think that an international officer should know many languages, but now what I think is that they should be open-minded."

THE MANY HATS OF AN INTERNATIONAL OFFICER



## **EDITORIAL**

eadership in international education has long been a topic of interest for practitioners and professional associations in the field.

Indeed, over ten years ago, the EAIE initiated a project with its sister association, the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA), to investigate leadership needs in Europe and Australia. Undertaken in 2012 and 2013, the project looked closely at generic and specific leadership capabilities in international education. It identified that the development of advanced leadership and management capability among up-and-coming professionals was crucial to the advancement of international education worldwide.

I doubt that many would argue with that finding today. Yet the professional landscape of international higher education is ever-evolving, with the pace of change appearing to intensify in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and in light of various other crises which continue to impact the sector.

Within this context, this Summer 2024 edition of Forum is timely, as it seeks to draw together different perspectives on leadership concerns in international education today.

From one perspective, we appear to be in the midst of an ongoing reorientation of international education practices and activities following the pandemic. Not only are institutions now more closely focused on online and hybrid delivery of international education, but we are more actively considering cross-cutting issues like diversity and inclusion and a rethinking of international risk management models. With conflict now raging in proximity to Europe, and increased concerns about migration and housing pushing various governments to

restrict the flows of mobile students, the situation facing international education leaders certainly remains dynamic.

One thing that remains unchanged, however, is the diversity of pathways which lead into a career in international higher education. This diversity is acknowledged to be a key strength of the sector, but it also means that pathways to leadership and career progression routes are generally non-linear.

Reflecting the broad range of backgrounds of those people working in the field, professional development opportunities are also diverse, with a large proportion of training undertaken directly in the workplace and tailored to the specific needs of individual roles. This is supplemented through formalised training, either delivered through academic qualifications or through professional training delivered by international education associations.

The EAIE itself offers a wide range of training through the EAIE Academy, ranging from short interactive online courses, to in-person classroom courses and larger workshops. Visit www.eaie.org/training to find out more.

To stretch our thinking about leadership, I'm delighted that Professor Danica Purg agreed to be interviewed for this edition. Professor Purg is President of the IEDC - Bled School of Management in Slovenia and a founding member of the European Leadership Centre based at IEDC. The European Leadership Centre promotes good leadership in Europe as a pathway to achieving heightened European competitiveness and more progressive and socially responsible European development. For international educators, I believe Professor Purg's broader perspectives on leadership

and management are fascinating, in particular the incorporation of art and music as a metaphor for leadership at IEDC – Bled School of Management.

I hope that this edition of Forum supports a greater understanding of leadership in our field and stimulates new thinking about professional development and careers in international higher education. With thanks to the authors and to Ragnhild Solvi Berg on the EAIE Publications Committee who joined me in reviewing submissions.

If you have a particular interest in this topic, then you may want to look back to the Winter 2021 edition of Forum on the topic of 'Internationalisation for all'. This edition focused on distributed leadership in internationalisation and sought to understand the ways in which distributed activity in international education reinforced and amplified successful internationalisation.

Further reading and listening on leadership, strategy and policy is readily available from the EAIE Library at www.eaie.org/knowledge/library.html

— DOUGLAS PROCTOR, EDITOR publications@eaie.org



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Leadership is a skill that must be nurtured. An apparent lack of professional development opportunities can lead to frustration among higher education managers, but growing numbers of training programmes and networking possibilities are available. Grabbing the lifelong learning opportunities on offer could be the key to a successful and fulfilling career, but what opportunities are out there?

lobal challenges are transforming the landscape of higher education. One of the most significant trends is marketisation, which is leading to a greater service orientation of the sector but also to increased competition between universities.

Traditional research-focused institutions are being challenged by the private sector, which prioritises teaching and services over scholarship. This shift is driving the higher education industry to provide a wide range of professional operations beyond academia. These include career development, marketing and recruitment, quality assurance services, communications and, maybe most significantly, international relations. In addition, there is a pressing awareness of the responsibility of higher education managers towards society, with increased expectations for generating a positive social, economic and environmental impact.

However, what we often find at universities is academic leadership with limited managerial experience on one side, while on the other we have professional managers assigned in operational silos. These managers have limited know-how beyond their own 'engine room' and have few professional development or career opportunities, leading to frustration, dead ends and departures from the sector.

In this ever-evolving environment, what skills and abilities are needed to navigate the complexities and lead successful and fulfilling careers in international higher education management? And how can these competencies be acquired?

## JACKS OF ALL TRADES

Higher education is a unique sector. Some see it as an industry that has been professionalising and internationalising immensely, largely following consumer

forces and supply and demand. In this context, today's higher education managers must master a mix of competencies, including inter-departmental managerial skills, academic understanding and a knowledge of the latest trends in higher education.

Strategic thinking, cross-cultural awareness and the ability to navigate complex power dynamics within institutions are also required to succeed in these roles, and leaders must foster innovative and

Today's higher education managers must master a mix of competencies, including inter-departmental managerial skills, academic understanding and a knowledge of the latest trends in higher education.

inclusive work environments, embrace diversity and engage in strategic change management to sustain and improve an institution's operations. This will in turn drive positive change and excellence. It will create a competitive advantage by attracting top staff and academics who seek a supportive and enriching professional experience.

Naturally, such diverse and intricate competencies cannot be sustained without developing skills such as empathy, emotional intelligence, agility, resilience and awareness of one's own strengths and limits.

Effective international higher education leaders are therefore jacks of all trades, mastering a critical mix of management and human-centric skills – these

competencies are not innate and must be developed continuously. There is a persistent need to invest in professional development programmes that will equip us to succeed in the dynamic higher education sector.

## **LEADERSHIP TRAINING**

Since we work in education, it seems natural to look at programme offerings and professional development opportunities in our own institutions to grow the skills needed to succeed. Business schools in particular have been nurturing leadership skills in their programmes, targeting current learners and professionals, for instance through executive education. Business schools tend to develop basic skills in how to manage an organisation (finance, people management, marketing, etc), so these programmes are relevant for leaders and managers of higher education institutions. Online, non-degree providers are also essential players in leadership development, with Massive Open Online Courses and other self-learning options having the benefit of flexibility to fit the lives of working professionals.

But higher education is a one-of-akind industry, meaning leadership development offerings need to be tailored to this specific ecosystem. High-level degree programmes specifically targeting higher education professionals have developed worldwide. In Europe, there is a doctoral degree in higher education management at the University of Bath in the UK, a PhD in internationalisation of higher education at Università Cattolica in Italy and a doctorate in higher education leadership and management at Luiss Business School in Italy. Similar programmes can be found at Boston College and the University of Pennsylvania in the United States.

High-quality workshops and training are also offered by international industry associations such as the European Association for International Education and the International Association of Universities, aiming to enhance the knowledge and advance the careers of higher education professionals. These are often delivered by like-minded experts who know the job and share a passion for education.

## **NETWORKING AND VOLUNTEERING**

Beyond these formal programmes and training options, another key element of skills development is networking and volunteering in international associations.

brings new ideas to implement and share with colleagues at the workplace, which explains how the association, just like the European Association for International Education and other volunteer-driven organisations, has been able to rely on volunteers despite them having very demanding jobs. A win—win for all parties!

## LIFELONG LEARNING

So, what will a career as a leader in international higher education look like in the future? No one knows. As technological advances transform the sector, jobs will change, appear and disappear. What seems certain is that the key to a relevant,

As technological advances transform the sector, jobs will change, appear and disappear. What seems certain is that the key to a relevant, impactful and enjoyable career is to grab the diverse lifelong learning opportunities available.

Discovering how things are done in other settings can be inspiring and bring perspective to our own professional activities.

At AACSB, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, a volunteer-based business school association, deans and associate deans from accredited schools can mentor those pursuing the accreditation process in other countries.

These mentors often report how being confronted with different regulatory, cultural and institutional contexts challenges their assumptions and reminds them that there are other ways, maybe better ones, to accomplish similar goals within an institution. It strongly impacts their personal and professional development and

impactful and enjoyable career is to grab the diverse lifelong learning opportunities available. This will help develop the timeless leadership skills needed to navigate the wild but beautiful uncharted territories of higher education.

And once you've achieved new heights in higher education leadership, you must take the opportunity, as a true leader, to help others climb up and enjoy the view.

— MARINE CONDETTE & MATHIAS FALKENSTEIN



# LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE ASSOCIATE DEANS AND INTERNATIONALISATION

Middle leaders at higher education institutions occupy a powerful, dynamic position between the top decision-makers and the hands-on work. Given the right support, they can use their proximity to teaching, learning and research to boost international recruitment, develop successful partnerships and create effective Internationalisation at Home strategies. Raul Sanchez Urribarri brings the important role played by these middle leaders to the fore, and advocates for the implementation of dedicated support structures.

hat is the role of academia's 'middle leaders' in charge of internationalisation? As international education continues to change and new challenges and opportunities emerge in the context of a polycrisis,¹ these deans, associate deans and vice-deans can play a major contribution towards fostering a principled, responsible and socially meaningful internationalisation agenda at the faculty or school level.

These middle leadership positions are usually perceived as being "involved in more strategic as opposed to operational duties".<sup>2</sup> For example, in Australia, associate or deputy deans for 'international' are typically in charge of a range of strategic and operational goals, including one or more of the following:

- Identifying and developing new international partnership or engagement opportunities;
- Managing and ensuring quality control of such partnerships;
- Overseeing, developing and implementing a wide range of international education efforts, from student mobility initiatives to Internationalisation at Home;
- Conducting and overseeing international student recruitment opportunities;
- Looking after international students at the undergraduate or postgraduate level;
- Supervising student exchange efforts involving the faculty;
- Looking after international alumni networks for the school or faculty; and

Fostering and managing international research collaborations.

Some associate deans are in charge of only a few of these areas, while others are in charge of all these tasks and more.

## **POWERFUL POSITION**

While associate and deputy deans in general are perceived as "the meat in the sandwich", the reality is usually more complex and varies widely across university systems and specific institutional settings. Given their many and varied responsibilities, their unique position within the institution – receiving and managing orders from above while engaging with a broad range of stakeholders, including administrative staff and students – and the lack of autonomous resources and

slow to react to the many changes taking place across the sector (for a variety of reasons, including institutional structures, bureaucratic procedures, risk management imperatives, budgetary responsibilities and public pressure), middle leadership can often engage with these changes in a dynamic and responsive fashion.

Associate deans can access a broad range of information sources and input about the situation on the ground, allowing them to identify 'pain points' and address them more quickly. Given the wide network they need to cultivate and manage, associate deans have *relational power*, which is essential for the development of well-designed strategies and their successful implementation. More importantly, their proximity to teaching, learning and research activities in

While top higher education leadership can be slow to react to the many changes taking place across the sector, middle leadership can often engage with these changes in a dynamic and responsive fashion.

decision-making prerogatives, these roles can be particularly challenging.<sup>4</sup> It is safe to assume that this is the case for middle leadership in internationalisation as well.

But this Janus-faced position between decision-making and being at the coalface is particularly powerful, especially in times of broader transformations. While top higher education leadership can be particular fields puts them in a position to fine-tune responses across the diversity of needs of the modern university.

This is certainly the case for associate deans for international. For example, in this time of crisis in international recruitment efforts as a result of an evolving (and troubling) political landscape in several countries, <sup>5</sup> associate deans can work

with the international recruitment office and the school or faculty they represent to come up with a principled, informed strategy to understand what this means *in practice* across the university.

In addition to quantitative data, they can access valuable qualitative information by talking and listening to their middle management leadership to make them work.

## SUPPORT NEEDED

For all these and other purposes, associate deans need the best possible conditions to carry out their tasks and goals. Dedicated budgets, their own financial resources

Associate deans should, at the very least, be given as much administrative support as possible, the visibility and authority to make decisions and, most importantly, the active backing of their leaders and peers.

academic colleagues, relevant staff and students. And at a time when institutions are seeking to develop new partnerships that reflect the shifting global landscape, associate deans can engage with their colleagues in 'bottom-up' processes to identify partnership opportunities grounded in existing networks and reflecting their aspirations and goals – thus enhancing the prospects of success for these partnerships.

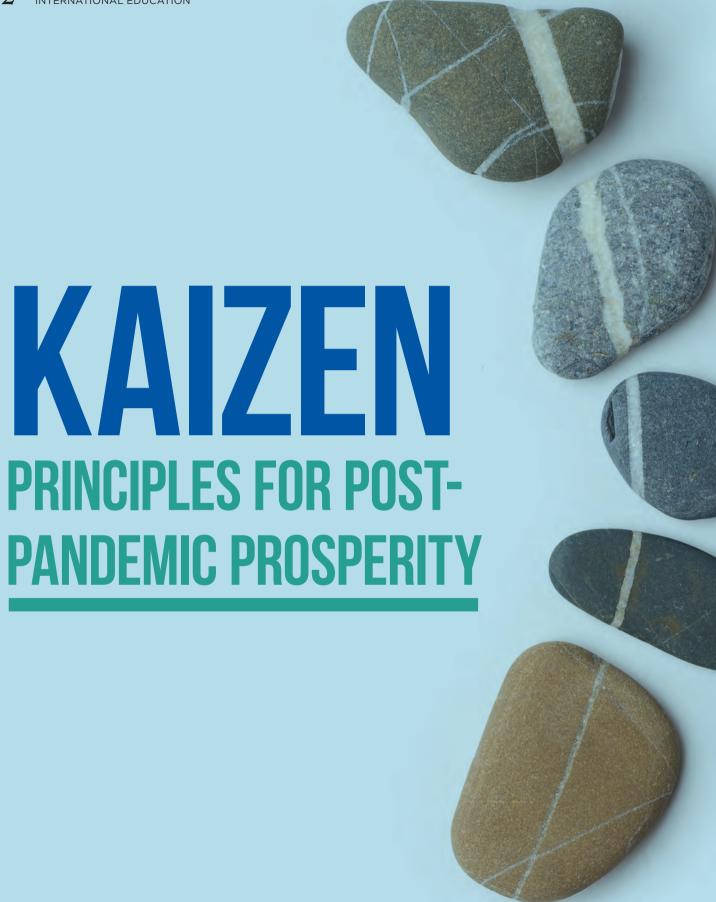
Associate deans can also be valuable actors in an institution's efforts to foster diversity, equality, access and inclusion in international education and to come up with Internationalisation at Home strategies that enhance inclusion and help develop an intercultural perspective for students and faculty while being environmentally sustainable. These initiatives require creative, effective and committed

and decision-making autonomy would be ideal, but this is rarely the case for middle leaders. However, associate deans should, at the very least, be given as much administrative support as possible, the visibility and authority to make decisions and, most importantly, the active backing of their leaders and peers.

Ultimately, for these middle leaders in academia to play their part in advancing internationalisation, there must be support structures in place to enhance their professional development both within universities and at the level of international associations.

 $-{\tt RAUL\,SANCHEZ\,URRIBARRI}$ 

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How can leaders in international education navigate the ever-changing world of higher education? With international education and student expectations evolving after the pandemic, institutions and leaders need a solid framework to help them adapt, innovate and thrive. The Japanese Kaizen philosophy offers five key principles for success.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the international higher education landscape has been significantly reshaped, presenting both challenges and opportunities for higher education institutions worldwide. Senior international officers and institutional leaders must respond to rising geopolitical tensions, growing demand for online education programmes and the fast-moving locomotive that is artificial intelligence.

effectively. Student needs should serve as north on the compass of both programme development and student services.

Student expectations have evolved since the pandemic. As well as wanting educationally rich cultural experiences, they now put a greater emphasis on flexibility, career-aligned curricula, career development opportunities, digital learning modalities and support for mental health and well-being.

## In our evolving environment, the principles of Kaizen offer a powerful framework for international education leaders to navigate complexities and drive continuous improvement.

While resources and training programmes such as those offered by the European Association for International Education and the NAFSA: Association of International Educators provide useful guidance, international education leaders could also take a cue from the Japanese lean management philosophy known as Kaizen.

In our evolving environment, the principles of Kaizen offer a powerful framework for international education leaders to navigate complexities and drive continuous improvement. By embracing the five principles of Kaizen – know your customer, let it flow, go to Gemba, empower people and be transparent – educational leaders can adapt, innovate and thrive in the post-pandemic era.<sup>1</sup>

## PRINCIPLE 1: KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER

The purpose of international education programmes is to serve the global student population. Understanding students' needs, preferences and challenges is paramount if leaders are to deliver value

Knowing your customer requires institutional representatives and recruiters to be physically present in student markets or home countries. To gain a deeper understanding of student needs, institutions should survey their students or conduct focus groups at the beginning, middle and culmination of their programmes. By actively listening to students, gathering feedback and analysing data, educational leaders can tailor their programmes and services to meet evolving needs, ensuring satisfactory learning experiences and student success.

## **PRINCIPLE 2: LET IT FLOW**

The principle of flow emphasises the importance of eliminating bottlenecks and streamlining processes to ensure smooth, efficient operations. In the context of international education, this translates to optimising administrative procedures, enrolment processes and academic pathways for international students.

To achieve flow, leaders should ask these questions: What bureaucratic hurdles can be simplified?

Is the process streamlined with the student front of mind? How can we reorganise staff to reduce silos, address redundancies or create cross-trained teams? How can we leverage technology for automation?

On that last point, artificial intelligence technologies offer significant potential for efficiency and present an opportunity for leaner organisations to focus their staff time on providing higher-level student success support, enhancing the student experience and minimising unnecessary delays and frustrations.

## PRINCIPLE 3: GO TO GEMBA

*Gemba*, a Japanese term meaning 'the real place', underscores the significance of first-hand observation, similar to the

## PRINCIPLE 4: EMPOWER PEOPLE

A key component of the Kaizen philosophy is stakeholder empowerment. Recognition of the invaluable knowledge that frontline workers possess and the ways in which these insights can drive improvement is crucial to organisational success.

In the context of international education, this principle manifests through encouraging, and providing financial resources for, staff and faculty to seek out professional growth opportunities. Sponsoring a culture of continuous growth at the individual level allows stakeholders to proactively contribute to institutional-level improvement initiatives.

Providing access to development opportunities is just the first step in creating a culture of empowerment. Leaders must where relationships are critical to the mission, uncertainty prevails and frequent and unpredictable disruptions occur – a context that international education leaders know all too well.

Leaders must build trust among their staff, with international partners and with students. They must foster accountability in all practices and policies at all levels within their organisations. The demonstration of integrity is directly related to the retention of both students and highly skilled employees. Students and employees vote with their feet and reputation is everything.

Acting ethically and communicating openly and honestly with stakeholders about decisions, policies and challenges is necessary to ensure clarity and alignment of goals. A culture of transparency, open communication and accountability drives individual-level ownership of the mission and creates effective organisational communities with a shared purpose.

## Artificial intelligence technologies offer significant potential for efficiency and present an opportunity for leaner organisations to focus their staff time on providing higher-level student success support.

Latin term in situ. For leaders in international education, this entails tuning in to the daily experiences, challenges and triumphs of students, faculty and staff. Going to Gemba means shadowing administrative processes and roles, conducting classroom observations, participating in student life activities and leading focus groups. By immersing themselves in the real learning and working environment, leaders can gain valuable insights, identify areas for improvement, foster a culture of collaboration and innovation and make better decisions. Going to Gemba allows leaders to drive the meaningful change needed to adapt to the altered landscape of the post-pandemic era.

also encourage open communication and recognise and reward innovative ideas and contributions to programme development, recruitment and operations.

International education leaders can drive continuous improvement and excellence in education by harnessing the collective expertise and creativity of their staff. The culture of empowerment also extends to students, who should be provided with support mechanisms and curriculum structures that enable them to take ownership of their learning journey.

## PRINCIPLE 5: BE TRANSPARENT

Transparency lies at the heart of Kaizen philosophy. It is crucial in environments

## A CONSTRUCTIVE FRAMEWORK

In conclusion, Kaizen principles offer a constructive framework for international education leaders to navigate the intricacies of the post-pandemic environment and facilitate continuous improvement. By adopting these principles, international education organisations can adapt, innovate and thrive amid uncertainty.

By remaining student-centred, streamlining processes, engaging with frontline operations, empowering stakeholders and fostering transparency, leaders can position their organisations for success in the ever-evolving landscape of international education.

— MARIE C. MARTIN

1. Kaizen Institute. What is Kaizen: Dive into the Kaizen methodology. https://kaizen.com/what-is-kaizen.



**ACROSS AFRICA** 

What does leadership in international research look like beyond the Eurocentric norm? In this article Huba Boshoff and Divinia Jithoo present a recent analysis of intra-African research team leaders, as seen from a South African perspective. They highlight the need for specific leadership and development programmes, and tailored leadership pathways, which can support research for Africa, by Africa.

eadership is a key success factor that drives impactful internationalisation both on an institutional and at a national level. Creating both an ecosystem and a pathway to leadership that supports leaders dealing with the complexity, diversity and challenges inherent to higher education's internationalisation requires a nuanced and innovative approach. Zooming into one area of internationalisation, namely the internationalisation of research, this article explores the potentials for enhancing the capacity for research leaders through the capacity development of support staff, highlighting both the challenges and the opportunities therein.

The article is positioned against a two-fold challenge prevalent on the African continent. Firstly, the low levels of research output (*ie* publications) of African researchers. Secondly, what the challenge of understanding exactly what leading research teams in an international context entails.

## A SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE ON AFRICA'S RESEARCH OUTPUT

The challenge of Africa's low research output in the form of publications has been explored and analysed from both national and international perspectives. Although Africa makes up 12.5% of the world's population, it only contributes 1% of the global research output. According to Heleta and Jithoo, who have considered this issue in the South African context, while South Africa's international research collaboration has grown, the focus remains Eurocentric and aligned to the priorities of the Global North. <sup>2</sup>

Many institutions in South Africa aim to be 'leading' African universities, stating this objective in mission, vision and strategy statements. However, research has shown that there is little to no institutional direction, management or support aimed at increasing research collaboration within the continent. Consequently, much of the effort is left to individual researchers and academics to drive the increase of research collaboration within Africa. There is a leadership gap here that needs to be filled.

## **INTRA-AFRICA LED RESEARCH TEAMS**

A recent PhD study<sup>3</sup> has explored the role of intra-Africa academic research team leaders. The study investigates what this role entails, and highlights that continental sustainability is dependent on development supported by research for Africa, by Africa. The results also illustrate the dynamic leadership structures of existing intra-African collaborative research teams, highlighting that there is no one-size-fits-all model of leadership.

Data collated in 2022 (Figure 1) illustrates the perspectives of research and international office directors in the 11 South African research-intensive universities, and presents how they understand the role of academics in intra-African collaborative research. The data shows that the roles outlined in the figure below do not fall within the ambit of institutional leadership, research offices, international offices, faculty management or research centers.

These findings highlight the need for advancement of institutional direction, management and leadership of intra-African academic collaboration. Furthermore, the study spotlights the need for capacity building in relation to leading multinational and multicultural cross border research teams within the continent.

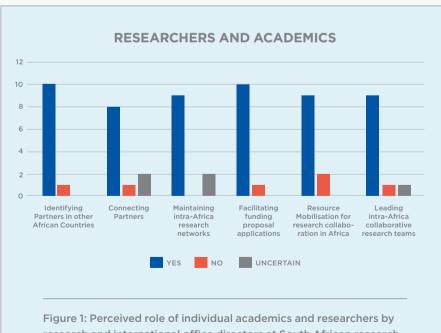


Figure 1: Perceived role of individual academics and researchers by research and international office directors at South African researchintensive universities. Jithoo (2023, 262).

## WHAT TYPE OF LEADERS ARE NEEDED?

The complexity of internationalisation sets the tone for the type of leadership needed. Yet even in framing this as 'a type' it should be underlined that the necessary skillset is a highly diverse one, requiring agility and flexibility along with intercultural competence and a thirst for diverse perspectives. Aspects to consider when framing this 'type' of leadership include being aware of cultural diversity, the real-world locations of team members, and how these locations are positioned within institutional cultures and contexts.

Skills associated with leading research excellence and piloting research teams include, but are not limited to, the ability to engage with stakeholders, advanced communication skills and the ability to work across cultures. An important element that must be highlighted is that African leadership styles are by and large driven by the collective rather than the individual, supporting the idea that greater efforts should be made to develop programmes that include team development approaches.

Qualitative research has shown that shared leadership approaches are useful for the intra-African academic collaborative research teams.4 Leadership types such as collegial, distributive and collaborative have emerged within these teams. The Ubuntu framework of leadership,5 has also manifested in the intra-African collaborative research team. Comparable with shared frameworks, the Ubuntu framework mirrors collegial leadership in that it emphasises collectivism and promotes transparent and democratic decision making, collective solidarity, community networks and social sensitivity. The framework promotes an Afrocentric approach that highlights respect for cultural differences.6

## PATHWAYS TO DEVELOPMENT

Developmental and support programmes to 'fast-track' the career development of young researchers into post-doctoral fellows and set them on a trajectory to become established researchers (that in principle could lead research teams), have become a strategic approach to leadership development in South Africa. One such example is the Future Professors programme, which is funded by the National Department of Higher Education and Training.

Although said programmes contribute to the development of research and research capabilities, they do not explicitly address leadership in research outside of disciplinary areas. The lack of leadership development programmes and clear career trajectories within higher education in general, is well documented as being a challenge for the advancement of institutions on the African continent.7 Zulfqar et al. highlight the phenomenon of senior professors being rewarded with level leadership positions without necessarily possessing the required leadership skills or attributes.8 It is therefore imperative that greater attention be given to the leadership pathways required within higher education institutions, particularly with a focus on how such leadership will drive the internationalisation agenda.

Existing programmes aimed at developing researchers can make a significant contribution to the training and support of individuals. However, leadership development interventions should also look more broadly at developing capacity beyond the individual, and focus on the institutional ecosystem for a collective collaborative culture. These approaches tackle the sustainability of interventions, offering wider benefits to institutions. This can include leadership training interventions that use a team model. Another approach could

involve being more intentional about adding leadership training to all levels of the research career pathway (from postgraduate student level to established researchers) as well as including other stakeholders in the research environment.

Leading impactful and comprehensive internationalisation through research is vital for the success of universities in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa today. Facilitating leadership development and success in this area should, therefore, be prioritised.

## — HUBA BOSHOFF & DIVINIA JITHOO

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Professor Danica Purg is a leader, manager and educator with an impressive breadth of experience. Throughout her career she has founded and lead various schools and associations including the IEDC – Bled School of Management, the European Leadership Centre at IEDC and CEEMAN, the International Association for Management Development in Dynamic Societies. As someone who is currently at the helm of management and leadership, Professor Purg has a unique overview of its practice and development in Europe and beyond.

Professor Purg, you have successfully founded a range of bodies with a focus on leadership and management. How do you see the intersections between management and leadership? Do you think it's possible to draw a line between them? DP: Yes, for 38 years I have led the IEDC - Bled School of Management, which was the first management school in Central and Eastern Europe. IEDC stands for International Executive Development Center. When I established the school in 1986, management was not well regarded in socialist countries. We were Yugoslavia, we were a socialist country and we had a self-management system. I found a way to give the school a name without mentioning the word 'management'. Later, in 2000, we came to Bled, and built a beautiful new school. We decided to keep the old name and call the school IEDC - Bled School of Management, because it was no longer a problem to mention management.

In our school, the focus is on leadership. Of course, I do not only teach leadership, but I am also a leader and a manager; I believe that to be successful, you must be both. But, of course, there is a difference. I believe that management is more the craft than leadership. It's more related to technical and practical knowledge of industry or services, and leadership focuses more on the art side. In our school, we have a chair for Arts and Leadership, and the school really is an art gallery itself, housing more than 200 beautiful paintings. I think that leadership has more to do with vision. If you add management to leadership's vision, imagination,

creativity, inspiration, motivation *etc* then it's really a fantastic combination of craft and art. At the IEDC - Bled School of Management, students learn from artistic metaphor; we have artists lecturing and professors who are experts in artistic metaphor. We have, for example, a choir that the students learn

Of course, I do not only teach leadership, but I am also a leader and a manager; I believe that to be successful, you must be both.

to conduct, and we have a famous violinist who decomposes music, showing students some of the main elements of leadership in a Bach sonata, for example. From the visual artist you learn to become a better observer, and from all artists you learn in fact the communication skills, empathy, creativity and critical thinking.

Communication skills and networking are also required, but, for me, courage was also very important because I set up the IEDC during a different time. In Yugoslavia, we had self-management as an economic and a political system. It was very difficult to propose a new concept which was deeply, how shall I say, not disturbing, but deeply changing — changing the mindset. Moving from self-management to management.



To what extent do you think that leadership skills are generic across sectors and industries? Are some specific skills required for leading within a higher education context?

DP: I think that it's pretty generic. Of course, in every industry, you must have some basic understanding of the industry. But I spend most of my time taking a holistic view of leadership, specifically focusing on networks and collaboration. I think that it's very important that, while we have general management courses, we finally have some [industry-specific] courses in, for example, health management. So, I think it is very important to have industry understanding, alongside some basic principles of management and leadership.

What does the training of leadership look like from your perspective? Is it theoretical, experiential, or practical?

## Do you have some good examples of best practice in leadership development in higher education?

DP: You mentioned a very good word: experiential. [At my institution] we believe very much in experiential learning. I will never use the word training. I think it's better to think about developing people, developing leaders. I think that you need to have both theoretical and practical knowledge, combined and integrated with real consulting projects. Our diploma is not a written piece of paper. Rather, students receive a project. For example: 'How to save a company', 'How to change a sales strategy'. One project helped a fantastic actor on the island of Brijuni in Croatia. He hosts a theater every summer, and our students helped him develop the theater to become financially viable. The students developed a concept, encouraged him to employ a professional manager and they told him not to give away too many tickets free of charge. Usually I received a free ticket, but I remember that when I visited after the student's diploma work, I had to pay for my ticket. I thought, 'fantastic, they learned their lesson!' So, I believe in experiential learning and in improving skills through good practice.

Your work has taken you around the world. While we operate in a larger global context, the EAIE is a European association. We're curious to know if you think there are uniquely European approaches to leading?

DP: I think that in Europe, we are different – and in some respects better. Better because we consider the stakeholder view, and not just the shareholder view like in, say, the US. So, in my view, there is something like a European style of leadership, although, of course, not every company practices it. I would go further and say you have, for example, a Scandinavian way of leading. I remember that I was once teaching a group of managers from a Swedish company. I was talking about team development and they were almost criticising me and correcting me. They said, in Sweden, they believed more in their kind of team building as opposed to the one I was teaching, so I think that there are different styles even within Europe.

Europe is maybe more familiar with leadership that looks towards integration, both within and outside the company. That's why we talk about stakeholders. We are also much more socially driven, and we pay much more attention to all employees. That is, we are more egalitarian. I can't imagine being a leader in a company and having a large salary and

all kinds of bonuses for myself, and then workers and employees not having that. This is very difficult for me to imagine. So, we try to educate our students with these values in mind.

Another area that we're very interested in is ethical leadership, and corporate social responsibility. I wonder if you could speak to changes that you've witnessed in leadership behaviours around those matters throughout your career? Maybe particularly environmental sustainability, for example?

DP: Yes, I like that question very much. I believe that leaders have great impact, and they can change things, for better or

interested in them, but now they're asking for seminars because they want to change. So, one way to increase sustainability is to make obligations.

Concerning ethics: before I became the director and president of a management school I was teaching ethics at a university. So, 33 years ago, we were one of the first business schools in the world to include ethics as a required subject. Our school is based on three pillars: ethics, sustainable development, and art and leadership. We were the first to champion ethics. So, if one method is to oblige, the other one is to motivate. We are motivated, in our school, by Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME).

I think you can only inspire by your own example. If you are walking the talk and doing the things that you are preaching, I think that is the biggest message you can send.

for worse. Of course, we would prefer that they change for the better. Sustainability is one of the issues where leaders have an impact, and fortunately it's developing for the better – I can tell you it's much different than it was 10 or 20 years ago. The European Union has been especially helpful, because now they're imposing some goals, for example, forcing companies to become sustainable, mandating sustainability reports, *etc.* Now companies are asking our school to organise seminars to advise them how to make progress in this respect. In the beginning we offered lectures, and companies were not too

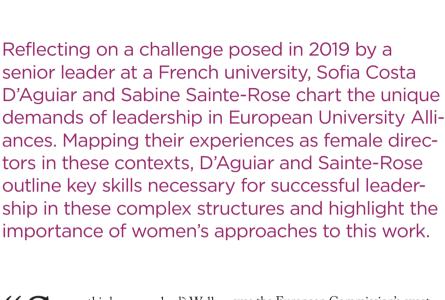
We wanted to be a PRME champion, and we were the first in Central and Eastern Europe. Now there are two PRME champions in CEE, the Hungarian business school, and us. We would like very much to motivate other schools to deal more with sustainability. We do this through our International Association CEEMAN [International Association for Management Development in Dynamic Societies]. We work hard in our school to provide the students with knowledge about this, and then they take it forward, so I'm happy it is going in a good direction. Nevertheless, it's still going too slowly.

You've been a student of leadership, you teach others, and you practice leadership in your work. Is there a key lesson that you've learned along the way that you would want to share with aspiring leaders?

DP: I think you can only inspire by your own example. If you are walking the talk and doing the things that you are preaching, I think that that is the biggest message you can send. I have talked a lot about how management education can influence things; we are talking a lot in Europe about leaders' impact. What we say in CEEMAN is that management education must be excellent and relevant. In every accreditation we are looking to see that it is relevant, not only excellent. Because if it's not relevant, then it's not interesting for the society. There also must be a lot of energy. If you believe in something, then you'll be driven by that energy. I think that you can only have this energy if you have a strong belief in something. Everything is also connected; equality, diversity, inclusion, the fight against violence, climate change - you can see that the people who believe in one of these values tend to believe in the others. It's a pleasure to meet such people, it's a pleasure to work with such people, and it's a pleasure to develop such people into true leaders.

## THE ODYSSEY OF LEADERSHIP A FEMALE PERSPECTIVE





o, you think you can lead? Well, try this new leadership challenge then: transforming higher education to empower Europe's universities as drivers of social, systemic and sustainable transformation. And you will have to do this across several countries, cultures and hierarchies, with no clear roadmap, insufficient funding, huge regulatory barriers and no clear vision on the future." These were the words of a senior leader at a French university in 2019

Women directors and coordinators of the European University Alliances face the daunting task of forging new paths and blazing new trails in what is a deeply traditional landscape.

while presenting the European University Initiative to aspiring coordinators of European University Alliances. Continuing, he cautioned: "It's a rickety train, but we can't afford to stay at the station. Good luck." His assessment was correct. This

was the European Commission's exact aim when launching their call to support European Universities as bastions of this unprecedented transformation process. He was right about the challenges too.

Leading from the front, coordinators and directors are driving this transformation across a matrix deeply rooted in tradition and competitiveness. Mirroring broader global trends in leadership, women are notably underrepresented across management roles in European higher education. Thus, women directors and coordinators of the European University Alliances face the daunting task of forging new paths and blazing new trails in what is a deeply traditional landscape. Adaptability and resilience are essential weapons in their armory.

## RISK AND REINVENTION: THE PATH TO LEADERSHIP

Challenge accepted. Five years later, it is a good time for all of us to reflect on a remarkable journey marked by adaptability and resilience, but especially so for women like us – we are the directors of the European Engineering Learning Innovation and Science Alliance and AURORA Alliance respectively – in key leadership roles within these alliances. The voyage since 2019 has demanded professional and personal choices, including relinquishing

stable contracts and relocating (not always happy) families abroad. We took the 'rickety train' for a wild ride and discovered a whole new meaning to leading complex endeavours in higher education.

The European Universities Initiative presents an unprecedented opportunity for leaders to cultivate and refine their skills in a dynamic and ever-evolving landscape. It is a journey of continuous learning and unlearning, where leaders are called upon to navigate uncertainty with a steadfast commitment to their ideals.

the face of high levels of complexity. The transnational and multidisciplinary teams we worked with were fostering innovation and adaptation at every turn.

With an average day-to-day involvement of 200 people from across various institutions, it was crucial to overcome unconscious resistance to change and foster a willingness do things differently. Transitioning from the mindset of 'we've always done it this way' to adopting an open, positive stance, where challenges are seen as opportunities, requires daily

European University Alliances like AU-RORA and EELISA go beyond typical projects, engaging diverse stakeholders in transforming higher education. This involves coordinating over 30 expert teams across curriculum development, pedagogical innovation, and academic recognition, as well as managing six cross-cutting decision-making bodies. Our institutions adapted governance structures to support decentralised decision-making, facilitating agility in project phases and readiness for future growth.

During the piloting phase, we balanced control and creativity through co-design, maximising connection opportunities via online and in-person interactions. Key stakeholders, including students and staff, were empowered through co-creation activities and feedback mechanisms.

## From securing funding amidst uncertainty to navigating intricate political landscapes, our leadership style emerged as a delicate mix of resilience and adaptability.

Having led international teams in the cultural diplomacy sector and the industry for close to 20 years, we confronted the daunting challenges of this work head-on, leaving our comfort zones and navigating those uncharted territories with humility, determination and agility.

## PREPARING FOR THE VOYAGE: HARNESSING SKILLS FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD

We drew upon our previous international leadership roles to translate this vision into tangible offers and added value amidst the complex tapestry of organisational dynamics. From us, this required constant pedagogy and learning. It also required alignment between the strategy, actions and demands from the European Commission to manage operations in

dedication, patience, and perseverance. From securing funding amidst uncertainty to navigating intricate political landscapes, our leadership style emerged as a delicate mix of resilience and adaptability. With each obstacle faced, we tried to be dependable, reliable, and to maintain a calm demeanor in the face of adversity – or just tried to stay sane.

## THE POWER OF COLLABORATION: REDEFINING LEADERSHIP DYNAMICS

Our leadership emphasises inclusivity and soft power, proving valuable assets in our roles as Alliance Directors. We prioritise shared decision-making and distributed leadership, fostering a supportive network of colleagues. Motivation takes precedence over obligation, with collaboration at the core of our approach.

## NAVIGATING THE WINDS OF CHANGE: LEADING THROUGH UNCERTAINTY

To best adapt to the winds of change, we recognised the importance of shared decision-making and distributed leadership. Compared to the simpler governance and reporting lines that characterised the organisations we had previously worked in, our Alliance roles were often less about decision-making and aiming at quick solutions, but rather choreographing the decision making that would be done by others (including Governing Boards, Academic Council and experts of different kinds).

Also, in the face of shifting political landscapes and evolving expectations, Alliance leaders exemplify intrapreneurship, steering their teams towards organisational change with strategic foresight and resilience. Already in the 1980s, Pinchot¹ defined intrapreneurs as "dreamers who do; those who take responsibility for creating an innovation of any kind within an organization". And that is how despite COVID, BREXIT and the war in Ukraine we continued dreaming, and adapted to the new needs faced by our communities.

## BUILDING A SUPPORT NETWORK: CULTIVATING GROWTH AND RESILIENCE

As female leaders, we perceived the importance of prioritising care. We emphasised fostering a culture of support and well-being, and not losing sight of the health and vitality of our teams was paramount. Through mentorship, professional development, and peer-learning, we seized opportunities to foster a legacy of collaboration and growth within our staff. In the coordinating teams of European University Alliances, people who have been intrapreneurs and risk-takers are often extremely engaged, and when there is over-commitment mixed with lack of resources, the health risks are high. It is no secret that in Alliances, people have burnt out or dropped out. While creating balance and a culture of well-being was underemphasised in the excitement of the launch, we have since realised the importance of paying attention to these issues. Importantly, this involved self-regulation, and modelling both self-care and the ability to say no.

The FOREU informal groups of Alliance professionals also have been fostering a supportive network of colleagues and peers by exchanging information about

their challenges and best practices. Now FOREU has formalised its collaboration in a Community of Practice and has submitted a proposal under the Erasmus+Programme.

## CELEBRATING VICTORIES: SAVOURING THE JOURNEY

Amidst the trials and tribulations, it is essential to pause and celebrate the victories, nurturing a positive and motivating environment where teams thrive. The productivity and sustainability of our endeavour requires this. Despite the difficulties and hurdles, creating a positive and motivating context, sharing meals, laughing and joking, developing a sense of belonging in which everyone learns and gives their best, has brought us a long way.

## THE QUEST'S EPILOGUE: LESSONS LEARNED AND SHARED

Ultimately, we can confidently respond "Yes we can" to the question that was posed to us five years ago. For us, the essence of our female leadership lies in communicating on a common purpose, orchestrating a shared vision, motivating teams to embrace co-construction and continuous learning, and fostering self-awareness amidst the slowly evolving landscape of academia. We believe our alliances are stronger for it.

— SOFIA COSTA D'AGUIAR & SABINE SAINTE-ROSE

<sup>1.</sup> Pinchot, G. (1984). *Intrapreneuring: Why You Don't Have to Leave the Corporation to Become an Entrepreneur.* Harper & Row.

## NURTURING THE ROOTS TRAINING FUTURE INTERNATIONALISATION **LEADERS**

How exactly are leadership skills fostered in the international education sector? Given the importance of internationalisation in higher education, it is surprising that no specific training programme is required to pursue a career in an international relations office. Tackling this blind spot, Gustavo Insaurralde sheds light on their experiences lecturing on a Master's degree in Educational Tourism and Mobility. In doing so, Insaurralde provides a workable template for training future leaders in international education.

In one of her most famous poems, 'I think that the root of the wind is water', Emily Dickinson eloquently expressed the amazement caused by the sound of the sea. The roots of the wind are presumably coming from the continuous waves of the maritime water. As a narrative device, the wind can be compared to international mobility or, in a broader sense, the internationalisation of higher education. But what about the water and its roots? In other words, what about the training of the professionals responsible for internationalisation?

The chosen training programmes for higher education's internationalisation



officers-to-be are as diverse as these agents' career paths. However, no official data is available to measure the impact of certain training programmes. For instance, in France, there are no official statistics on the career paths, the organisation or even the existence of international relations offices within higher education institutions. As an example, the French government's annual report on higher education, research and innovation only describes working categories and their distribution across the public sector.

It seems that no specific training degree is required to pursue a career in international relations in higher

education – but there are great training programmes out there and they are hugely valuable.

## **TESTING THE WATER**

In August 2022, I was invited to be a guest lecturer on a Master's degree on educative tourism and mobility offered by the University of Caen Normandy. The objective of this programme is to train students to work in international relations offices at universities or in roles related to the international mobility of school pupils, slow travel, social tourism, scouting, faculty-led experiences, short stays and other types of mobility.

During the first two years of my involvement in this programme, I taught the basics of working in an international relations department. The tasks were rather simple: students were assigned a university from any European country and had to write a report describing its internationalisation policy. Based on what they discovered about the institution, they had to propose a written international partnership policy with Erasmus+ and non-Erasmus+ countries. I explained how to establish international agreements, what elements to include in a draft agreement and how to negotiate with different partners.

In the third year, I gave a 'writing workshop' for a specific Erasmus+ call on mobility projects for higher education students and staff funded by external funds. In this workshop, students were taught the basics of the call, the applicable rules and some writing hints. They had to

training internationalisation strategy, students are encouraged to propose a partnership policy with clearly defined objectives, missions and resources in order to translate these elements into a project application or a specific agreement. They have to interpret the institutional strategy

Students are confronted with real-life problems in the international domain: how to define a vulnerable student in a KA171 application involving third countries, the logistics of a call and the problem of ideas being lost in translation.

imagine working with a given French university to negotiate an application to this call with a non-European partner.

The format of the lectures reflects the daily work of an international relations agent. Students are confronted with real-life problems in the international domain: how to define a vulnerable student in a KA171 application involving third countries, the logistics of a call and the problem of ideas being lost in translation. The lectures are online, in English and involve working in groups. Important decisions such as deadlines are taken democratically, with the lecturer's involvement. And during my time in the programme, 20% of the students were international.

## **HEARING THE WAVES**

By participating in these challenge-based scenarios, students acquire both hard and soft skills. On one hand, while identifying a given university's research and and adapt a 'language' to it. On the other hand, students are confronted with a typical international relations scenario: they need to negotiate, debate and identify specific elements of a given case in a mostly online, international and intrinsically multicultural environment.

The course prepares them to understand the complexities of the French higher education system. These students are ready to become wind.

All in all, students on the course become equipped to face the challenges of the internationalisation of higher education. Combining technical tools and soft skills,

the course prepares them to understand the complexities of the French higher education system, the Erasmus+ regime and continuous negotiation with overseas universities. These students are ready to become wind.

However, some universities are failing to *hear the waves* by not offering training and vocational education programmes to strengthen international relations workforce capabilities. This is why it is important not only to give some visibility to these programmes and the prospects they can offer to the professional community, but also to use available vocational education tools, such as microcredentials, to *nurture the roots* by boosting the skills of budding international relations agents.

—GUSTAVO INSAURRALDE

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## THE MANY HATS OF AN INTERNATIONAL OFFICER



ecturers and teachers are usually regarded as the masters of wearing I numerous hats, meaning they perform various different roles in the context of their job. Recently, international relations officers and their teams have become the 'next top model' in this respect.

At UNICA, the Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe, we have found that international relations officers at our member universities are increasingly called upon to have a more versatile skill set to fulfil their roles in facilitating immersive educational experiences. In November, our annual gathering of international officers in

officers. As one acting director of an international relations service, who has been working in the field for three decades, put it: "The students' behaviour has changed, but not as expected. They're relying on us more."

This academic guiding role has expanded to a more undefined one, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. "The demand for support from our office for areas like mental health has definitely grown," said one university's global mobility manager. "It's always been there and now people might be more prepared to talk about it, which is definitely good." However, as they stressed, neither they

a place on the private market. Even the relationship with students seems to be changing, as families are getting more involved. One officer said: "Parents are very protective and very involved in any procedures related to their kids." Others agreed, highlighting that this is especially prevalent at the undergraduate level. An article in the Portuguese newspaper Expresso also reported on this phenomenon at the faculty level, with a professor from a university in Lisbon

Erasmus Student Network on the housing

crisis in Europe, the quality of the student

experience is highly influenced by housing

conditions.1 But are international officers

supposed to double up as estate agents? It

universities that campus housing does not

that they need to put in the work and find

seems to be the norm among European

fulfil demand, so international officers

have to prepare students for the reality

As one acting director of an international relations service, who has been working in the field for three decades, put it: "The students' behaviour has changed, but not as expected. They're relying on us more."

Sofia, Bulgaria, touched on topics as diverse as the future policy of Erasmus+, the accommodation crisis, managing cultural diversity and navigating difficult partnerships outside Europe.

To get a better understanding of their numerous roles, we talked to international officers in our network about the trends reshaping their teams. What we found is that they are true 'headmasters' of internationalisation, leading the responses to fundamental shifts in the sector.

## STUDENT SUPPORT

Advising international students remains one of the big tasks of international

nor their team are qualified mental health professionals - a statement that illustrates how far-reaching the role of international relations officer has become.

The pandemic has also shown how resilient international offices are. "We've had other crises, but COVID was something different. But in the end, it always comes down to adaptability," the acting director said. Another experienced director of an international cooperation office agreed: "There was tension, but we survived."

Another big demand related to students is support with accommodation. According to a study led jointly by the European Students' Union and the

## actually going so far as to communicate to students that messages sent by parents would go unanswered.2

## **ALLIANCE FATIGUE**

Beyond student support, additional work created by the European Universities Initiative has extended the remit of international relations offices. As enthusiastic as university leaders are about the initiative, which supports cross-border collaboration between universities, administrative staff in charge of its implementation seem to be a little less optimistic, with some voices raising the issue of "alliance fatigue".

"It definitely is extra," said one representative, adding that "even if you know you don't have to do anything to prepare for it or follow up on it, you know it's still time you have to put in".

Others agreed and, despite recognition that there were some actions taken in order to have extra personnel handling the initiative, all staff have had to work overtime because of alliances.

## INSTITUTIONAL ROLE

Amid all of these pressures, responses from institutional leaders vary. At one institution, we heard that international relations is a strong priority and the international office has a close relationship Forces including the growing influence of artificial intelligence and big data, a widening technological divide, an ageing society, climate change and threats to democracy compel the sector to adopt a more precise and inclusive definition of internationalisation – one that is more focused on societal needs rather than institutional aspirations.

To navigate this dynamic landscape and foster global understanding and collaboration, universities need professionals

"In the past, I used to think that an international officer should know many languages, but now

with governance. Still, the office said this could go one step further, noting that a student representative had a vote on the international committee but they did not. Speaking on behalf of the service at their institution, another agreed that some effort needs to be put into convincing leadership of the needs of their office. Their institution's relationship with alliances has been different: the international office "made trials and even proposals, but they were rejected. But we still follow closely so we know what's going on."

## A NEW ERA OF INTERNATIONALISATION

The growing complexity of the role of international relations officer is undeniable, but how exactly does this relate to the overall process of internationalisation in universities? To understand this, we need to accept the social transformative forces that are pushing for the reimagination of internationalisation.

who possess a diverse skill set to facilitate transformative educational experiences across borders and disciplines. "In the past, I used to think that an international officer should know many languages, but now what I think is that they should be open-minded," said one representative. Everyone agreed that flexibility and adaptability are very important, with one saying: "Our work is very, very creative."

## **HATS OFF**

what I think is that they should be open-minded."

Guide, diplomat, recruiter, event planner, mediator, project manager, city guide, strategist, data manager, publicist, secretary, accountant, ICT guru, careers adviser, coach, estate agent, therapist. The list of roles that a professional in international relations needs to cover seems to multiply in proportion to the complexity of internationalisation.

The skills that these professionals need to master include cross-cultural

competencies, global awareness, digital literacy, adaptability and resilience, interdisciplinary thinking, networking spirit and student-centred approaches.

Much beyond a collection of hats that international officers are collecting, we are witnessing the rise of global-minded educators who don't execute international plans or tactics but rather actively engage, or at the minimum have an interest, in the internationalisation strategies of their universities. And while university leaders continue to head up initiatives in internationalisation, it's undeniable that international relations officers hold a pivotal role in providing guidance and support in this endeavour. After all, what good is a captain without a lighthouse to navigate by?

Well, hats off to all international officers!

—ALEXANDRA DUARTE & BRIAN TALTY

<sup>1.</sup> Erasmus Student Network, European Students' Union. (2023). International student housing: How are exchange students in Europe navigating the housing crisis? https://www.esn.org/news/launchinternational-student-housing-report

<sup>2.</sup> Bastos, J. (2023, November 11). "Caramba, isto parece o liceu, estão sempre irrequietos": Universidades queixam-se da imaturidade dos alunos e da interferência dos pais. Expresso. https://expresso.pt/sociedade/.ensino/2023-11-11-Caramba-isto-pareceo-liceu-estao-sempre-irrequietos-universidades-queixam-se-da-imaturidade-dos-alunos-e-da-interferencia-dos-pais-b634e08f

s reflected in the various contributions to this issue of Forum magazine, leadership takes many forms and has a direct impact on the health and vitality of organisations big and small. The EAIE offers an excellent case in point. From its earliest days as a fledgling initiative to respond to the needs of the newly launched Erasmus student mobility programme, to its current role as the premier professional association for professionals working to advance all aspects of internationalisation in higher education across Europe, the EAIE has benefitted from the enthusiastic support of hundreds of volunteer leaders. Leading those volunteer leaders is the core responsibility of the EAIE President. Over the course of its 35-year history, the Association has relied on the dedication of 24 outstanding individuals who have generously given their time and expertise to the significant and

often challenging role of leading the EAIE forward, through all manner of anticipated challenges and unexpected developments. The President plays a crucial role in helping the EAIE Board to execute the EAIE's mission and vision, both in response to the current issues of the day, as well as with a clear eye on what the future may hold for the international higher education community in Europe and beyond. This work requires keen insight, deep commitment, real stamina and strong empathy for the many and varied challenges and opportunities facing our field. As the EAIE reaches its 35-year milestone, we salute the unique contributions that have been made by the individuals who have played this key leadership role for the Association and helped steward it forward to the significant position it enjoys on the international higher education landscape today. Many thanks, EAIE Presidents!

## **—**0 1990s

- **Axel Markert**, 1990, Germany
- Maria Sticchi Damiani, 1991, Italy
- **Kjetil Flatin**, 1992, Norway
- France Gamerre, 1993, France
- Hans de Wit, 1994, the Netherlands
- **Eva-Marie Haberfellner**, 1995, Germany
- Marianne Hildebrand, 1996, Sweden
- Giancarlo Spinelli (deceased), 1997, Italy
- **Linda Johnson**, 1998, the Netherlands
- H Iris Schwanck, 1999, Finland

## **O** 2000s

- Joan-Anton Carbonell, 2000, United Kingdom
- **Wedigo de Vivanco**, 2001, Germany
- Tim Birtwistle, 2002, United Kingdom
- **Jeroen Torenbeek**, 2003–2004, the Netherlands
- Antoinette Charon Wauters, 2004–2006, Switzerland
- **Fiona Hunter**, 2006–2008, Italy
- **Bjørn Einar Aas**, 2008–2010, Norway

## **-0** 2010s

- Gudrun Paulsdottir, 2010-2012, Sweden
- **Hans-Georg van Liempd**, 2012–2014, the Netherlands
- **Laura Howard**, 2014–2016, Spain
- **Markus Laitinen**, 2016–2018, Finland
- Sabine Pendl, 2018–2020, Austria

## **-0** 2020s

- Michelle Stewart, 2020–2022, United Kingdom
- Piet Van Hove, 2022–2024, Belgium



THE ULTIMATE STUDENT HUB EMPOWER **FUTURE GENERATIONS** 

With the annual EAIE Conference taking place 17-20 September 2024 in the pink city of Toulouse, the spotlight will soon fall upon this year's university partner, the University of Toulouse. A bastion of academic distinction, innovation, and opportunity the University of Toulouse was established in 1229 and stands as France's second oldest university, symbolising the rich academic heritage of the Western Occitanie region. With a student body exceeding 110,000 and a staff of 17,000, the University of Toulouse is a cornerstone of the French academic landscape. The forthcoming EAIE Conference and Exhibition provides an unparalleled opportunity to delve into the university's multidisciplinary ethos and its extensive network of global collaborations.



## **TOULOUSE'S VIBRANT ACADEMIC** LANDSCAPE

Toulouse, renowned as France's primary hub for job creation, is situated within the dynamic and innovative Occitanie region, and is recognised as the top contributor to France's research and development sector. Offering over 1000 listed courses, the University of Toulouse provides a comprehensive array of post-baccalaureate programmes, including Bachelor's, Master's, engineering, and doctoral degrees under the LMD system. As part of its diverse academic offer, the university hosts eight high-profile graduate schools (EUR) and a wide range of Masters programmes taught in English across various disciplines, complemented by courses in French as a Foreign Language (FLE). In



addition, it actively contributes to three European Alliance Universities, including the European Space University for Earth and Humanity, which emphasises space exploration across diverse disciplines, from science and engineering to economics, social sciences and art. These alliances cater to a global audience as illustrated by 15 prestigious doctoral schools under the umbrella of the 'École des Docteurs'. Indeed, the University of Toulouse is currently the second-largest academic site in France in terms of the number of PhDs in preparation, with over one third of students enrolled coming from outside France. This academic powerhouse fosters interdisciplinary research across more than 100 laboratories, supported by stateof-the-art facilities.

## SUPPORTING NEW ARRIVALS

At the University of Toulouse's Welcome Desk, new arrivals, including undergraduate students, PhD candidates, researchers and professors, gain access to essential services through the Toul'Box initiative, an all-in-one kit to make getting settled in as seamless as possible. From accommodation assistance to healthcare access and administrative support, a dedicated multilingual team stands ready to address inquiries and provide guidance year-round.

## FOSTERING INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

Drawing on the expertise of its staff, the University of Toulouse brings together its forces in research, education, and innovation to address major challenges in science and society. To break down barriers between academic communities, and foster exchanges with social and economic partners, the University of Toulouse is stimulated by the Toulouse Initiative for Research's Impact on Society (TIRIS). TIRIS is the university's flagship programme that brings together the higher education and research community of Toulouse and its region around a common goal: mobilising scientific excellence to support transitions and contribute to building a sustainable future.

## SUSTAINABLE INNOVATIONS AND GREEN LIFESTYLE

Toulouse, often referred to as the 'Pink City' due to its distinctively coloured buildings, embraces a sustainable ethos,

leading the way in renewable energies and the eco-friendly transformation of its environment. The city's commitment to environmental stewardship extends to its dynamic student life, where students actively engage in eco-friendly initiatives and contribute to the city's green transformation. Beyond academia, Toulouse boasts an attractive lifestyle. It is recognised as the fourth largest urban area in France and is regularly commended by national rankings for the quality of student life.

## TOULOUSE'S GLOBAL AND LOCAL COLLABORATIONS

Prominent faculty members, such as Nobel laureate Professor Jean Tirole, contribute to the institution's renown as a hub for economic research and innovation. Initiatives like 'Santé du Futur' underscore Toulouse's commitment to addressing global challenges through interdisciplinary collaboration. International students contribute significantly to the city's lively community, supported by programmes like Invest in Toulouse, which foster international projects and regional connections. Acting as a vital bridge between academia and employment, The University of Toulouse cultivates partnerships among educational institutions, industries, and research organisations across the Occitanie region and beyond. Leveraging Occitanie's diverse economy, spanning aerospace, agri-food, health, tech, renewable energy, water management and creative and cultural industries, Toulouse's graduates find opportunities for professional growth and innovation.

Toulouse's influence in aerospace extends far beyond its academic institutions. Numerous research institutions and laboratories, including those affiliated with the University of Toulouse, contribute to groundbreaking advances in engineering and space exploration. Within the broader Occitanie region, a spectrum of companies and research facilities, from industrial majors to innovative startups, play pivotal roles in the aerospace sector. Recognised as the epicentre of Aeronautics, Toulouse spearheads initiatives like green aviation and decarbonisation, showcasing its dedication to sustainability and mobility. Of particular note is the competitiveness cluster 'Aerospace Valley' and the Technological Research Institute (IRT-St Exupéry). Both are emblematic of Toulouse's thriving aerospace ecosystem, and work to foster collaboration among industry leaders, startups, researchers, and academic institutions, solidifying Toulouse's status as a global aerospace innovation hub. Furthermore, Toulouse's significant contributions to space exploration, including the training programmes of renowned astronaut Thomas Pesquet, underscore its pivotal role in advancing scientific discovery for humanity.

## INSIDE TOULOUSE'S INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

In addition to aerospace, Toulouse drives innovation across various sectors, notably in life sciences and health, with high-profile initiatives dedicated to healthcare advancements, such as the Oncopole or the new Institut Hospitalo-Universitaire focussing on aging in good health.

Last, but not least, Toulouse has renowned excellence in the field of artificial intelligence. For instance, the Artificial and Natural Intelligence Toulouse Institute (ANITI) facilitates collaborations to address complex challenges and develop pioneering solutions, with a focus on Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence (AI), a field essential for both transport and healthcare. Beyond AI, Toulouse leads initiatives in environmental sustainability, renewable energies, and future mobility, contributing to holistic societal progress.

In anticipation of the EAIE gathering in September 2024, the University of Toulouse is working with its members and partners across the Occitanie region to showcase their remarkably broad and appealing academic offer of world-class international university programmes, from Arts, Humanities, and Languages to Law, Economics, and Management, and from Human and Social Sciences to Science, Technology, Health, and Engineering Sciences. In a nutshell, the University of Toulouse offers exceptional multidisciplinary potential, stringent academic rigor and an excellent quality of life that provides students with essential skills for understanding today's rapidly changing world and for building a more sustainable and desirable tomorrow.

## **EAIE BLOG SPOT**

In between Forum issues, visit the EAIE blog for news, views and insights, at your fingertips anytime, anywhere. Just grab yourself a comfy seat and start browsing!



## European specificities: reflections from the 6th IAU Global Survey

Explore the unique challenges of European higher education in the latest insights on internationalisation trends from the 6th IAU Global Survey.

ow.ly/Zzx250S6Rxh



## International students: key for the German labour market

Unlocking the future of Germany's labour market through the talents of international students. Discover how global minds are fueling innovation and growth in STEM fields. ow.ly/VNr050S6Ryv



## Harnessing the power of evaluation to build better partnerships

How the ERASMUS+ EVALUATE project's framework will help when thinking about international university partnerships.

ow.ly/XN7G50S6Rub

## **EAIE PODCAST**



## Alex Usher & Jogvan Klein: Policy whiplash in Australia and Canada

Dive into international student mobility with experts Alex Usher & Jogvan Klein as they navigate the turbulent policy changes. ow.ly/exiA50S6RAh



## Jenna Mittelmeier & Asuka Ichikawa: Research with international students

Explore inclusion in academia, where experts discuss collaboration between researchers and international students.
ow.ly/WYM550S6SPi



## Danica Purg: Reflections on Leadership

Hear the full unabridged EAIE 2024 Summer Forum interview with Danica Purg on the EAIE Podcast.

ow.ly/X3Qb50S6RL4

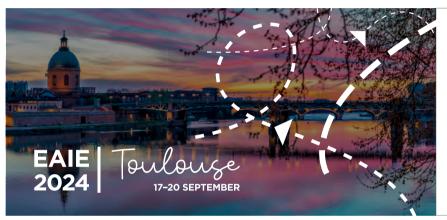


## Discover the exclusive space for **EAIE** members to connect and grow

The EAIE Community Platform, home to the Communities of Practice, is now open! Collaborate, network and engage with your peers on topics that matter to you.

- **Access unlimited networking:** Expand your network and connect with peers in similar roles and with shared interests.
- **Find and share support:** Discuss your projects, exchange ideas and find the support you need to excel in your daily work.
- **Enhance your visibility:** Showcase your expertise or interest in specific topics, potentially opening doors to new opportunities.

## **CALENDAR**



## 17-20 SEPTEMBER

34th Annual EAIE Conference and Exhibition in Toulouse En Route!

www.eaie.org/toulouse

## 14 & 16 OCTOBER

**EAIE Academy Online** 

Getting the best out of your summer school and short-term programmes

https://www.eaie.org/training/academy-online/summer-school.html



## 21 & 23 OCTOBER

**EAIE Academy Online** 

Best practices in evaluating foreign credentials

https://www.eaie.org/ training/academy-online/bestpractices-in-evaluating-foreigncredentials.html

## 18-19 NOVEMBER

**EAIE Academy Classroom** 

Building a toolkit for addressing international student mental health

https://www.eaie.org/training/academy-classroom/student-mental-health.html



## 02-03 DECEMBER

**EAIE Academy Classroom** 

Nurturing strategic international partnerships and alliances

https://www.eaie.org/training/academy-classroom/strategic-international-partnerships.html



## See you there!

Europe's leading international higher education conference & exhibition

www.eaie.org/toulouse