

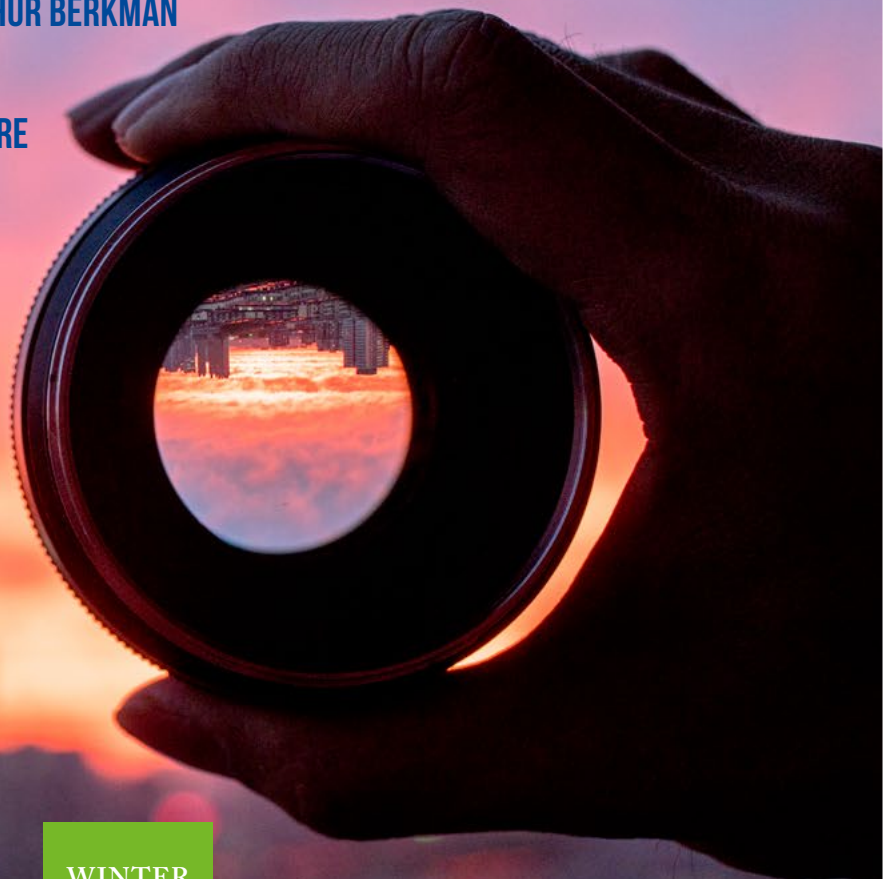
FORUM

MEMBER
MAGAZINE

Discussing international education

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CULTIVATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE AT EARTH



EDITORIAL

Despite the passage of time and the degree to which I feel so deeply embedded in the dynamics of international education after twenty years in the field, I'm constantly surprised by new developments. Evolving modes of engagement, new patterns of mobility, emerging questions and unintended consequences seem to be constantly stirring the pot. A search for a series of under-the-radar developments is precisely what drew us in this issue of *Forum* to consider the notion of 'unexpected internationalisation'.

Of course, what may be 'unexpected' or surprising to me may simply be a function of the fact that my peripheral vision is limited. We all wear blinders of some sort, which limits our understanding and awareness of other contexts and realities. Sometimes, these blinders take the form of geography or language, for example. Other times, privilege – one of the most pernicious kinds of obstacles to clarity and understanding – obscures our view. So, our quest for the 'unexpected' in this issue was humbly and honestly grounded in a desire to lift our eyes and learn: What's going on out there that hasn't been widely reported? What activities are underway that don't conform to some of our mainstream understandings and experiences of internationalisation? Where can we openly and honestly turn our attention to gain exposure to something new?

I can only speak for myself, but as a result of the articles included in this edition of *Forum*, I now know more about the approaches geographically remote Siberian universities are taking to advance their internationalisation agendas and activities. I have a sense of the scope of



ambitions and potentially remarkable implications for international cooperation along the new 'Silk Road' stretching from China to Western Europe. And I'm newly attuned to the fact that Poland exerts a strong pull as a destination for international medical students. There is much each of us can learn about the constantly evolving world around us. Expanding the circle from which we typically draw information and ideas, and listening deeply in the process, is crucial.

On the subject of listening, over the last year or so, the EAIE leadership has itself undertaken a close listening process with members and worked to develop consensus around four core values that frame the work of this association. Collectively, we aim to be **collaborative**, **inspiring**, and **inclusive**, and to aspire toward **excellence** in all aspects of our work. It is immensely gratifying to see this mission-driven association assert its

place on the international higher education landscape with increasing confidence and purpose.

My own sense of purpose is evolving, as well. This marks my last edition of *Forum* as chair of the Publications Committee. Rather than saying goodbye, though, I'm delighted to report that I'm moving into a new role within the EAIE as Associate Director Knowledge Development and Research. I've enjoyed my work on the Publications Committee immensely and look forward to continuing to participate in our collective efforts at the EAIE to learn, grow, and simply make the world a better place.

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PARALLEL PATHS TO INCLUSION

Internationalisation and indigenisation may seem like inherently opposing forces, but they may offer similar roadmaps to inclusion. In the Canadian context, efforts at indigenising higher education are revealing unexpected parallels between paths to inclusion for Indigenous and international students.

There are currently opposing forces shaking higher education towards transformation, and these pressures can at times feel like they are creating momentum in entirely different directions, namely towards both internationalisation and regionalisation simultaneously. While internationalisation remains the dominating flavour in higher education, anti-globalisation voices have been louder in the last decade, emphasising a pendulum swing towards a focus on regionalism.¹

In Canada this is perhaps less tangible than in Europe or even the US, however there is a similar tension growing between two seemingly divergent priorities that reflect this chasm. On the one hand, the phenomenon of internationalisation continues to gain unprecedented momentum in Canadian higher education. At the same time, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) – a body convened to document the history and impact of Canada's historic network of boarding schools for Indigenous peoples – has called upon higher education institutions to examine closely how they are prioritising the decolonising of the academy and of the curriculum.² Aimed at creating an educational landscape more inclusive of Canada's indigenous peoples, this decolonising process inherently and necessarily places an emphasis on regionalisation rather than globalisation.³

INTERNATIONALISATION AND INDIGENISATION: COMPETING AGENDAS?

In practice, this is felt in our institutions through conflicting agendas that seek to prioritise admission of Indigenous students, and bridge-building with

local Indigenous communities, while simultaneously promoting the continuous increase of our international student intake. The momentum of globalisation is inherently driven by neoliberal ambitions, whereas the decolonising of the academy, as a process, very much questions the adoption of neoliberal values, seeking instead to develop critical voices that can hone in on Canada's pre-settler heritage. This tension can be felt in seemingly ambivalent admissions policies, scholarship and financial aid objectives, in the prioritising of support services, and in a tangible struggle for visibility between these two groups of stakeholders and their advocates. Eventually it is bound to represent equally tangible conflicts in faculty hiring in the now competing fields of internationalisation and indigenisation, as these at times contradictory goals continue to gain momentum.

This in itself is perhaps a rather saddening observation for the pragmatically-minded, who may understand the need for the internationalisation of higher education in terms of financial sustainability, while also wishing to acknowledge the need to embrace the TRC's work, and the urgency around the progressive decolonising of the academy and the curriculum. One is left wondering if there is truly no way to merge these 21st-century priorities into a mindset that seeks out social justice while similarly acknowledging the economic realities of a global higher education market? Is it possible for a higher education practitioner, having felt this tension, to combine these current competing objectives in order to maintain a coherent approach to these two simultaneous Canadian priorities?

SHARED EXPERIENCES AT THE MARGINS OF THE CLASSROOM

One way to override the tension that is palpable in this current landscape of globalisation and indigenisation is perhaps to erode some of the theoretical tension between these two stances by adopting a perspective that allows a shared and genuine opportunity for transformative action. The key in this otherwise polarised landscape is perhaps to focus on the students who are at the centre of these processes, rather than honing in on the theoretical fabric that creates this tension.

Rather than seeing the internationalisation and indigenisation of the academy as theoretically mutually exclusive, one can perhaps conceive of them as less contradictory when they are examined through the eyes of students themselves.

perceive the traditional pedagogical approaches and cultural climate as still fairly ethnocentric.

The pedagogical strategies that can address this ethnocentrism, and create more inclusive classroom experiences, will be strikingly similar for both Indigenous students and international students. Universal Design for Learning (UDL), for example, seeks to offer more flexibility to learners in both classroom delivery and evaluations. By offering multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement, UDL provides multiple pathways to allow learners to use strategies that are congenial to them and individualised tools which they may have already integrated in their learning.⁴ An example of an ethnocentric higher education practice

Many institutions are still ill-equipped, in terms of pedagogy and campus culture, to address the full spectrum of learner diversity

International students and Indigenous students in fact share very similar experiences on 21st-century Canadian campuses. The reason why their presence in higher education is increasing may be due to conflicting factors, but their phenomenological experiences share much in common. Many higher education institutions indeed, despite their best endeavours, are still ill-equipped, in terms of pedagogy and campus culture, to address the full spectrum of learner diversity. Both international students and Indigenous students are likely to

would be the way lecturers tend to have narrow expectations when it comes to classroom participation.⁵ By offering learners multiple ways to engage in class that go beyond the traditional 'raise your hand and answer' format, instructors can develop strategies (online forums, social media exchanges, curriculum co-creation opportunities, exit slips, *etc*) that create inclusive conditions for the full spectrum of learners' diversity, and both international students and Indigenous students end up, as a result, having more positive classroom experiences.



Though internationalisation and indigenisation can seem to represent opposite processes of globalisation and regionalisation, the experiences of both these groups of students are more often than not similar in terms of marginalisation, and the pedagogical means available to correct this and create inclusive models for them are often identical.

INTERNATIONALISING AND INDIGENISING THE CURRICULUM

Beyond the teaching and evaluation format, there is also work to be done on the curriculum content itself, in order to erode eurocentric perspectives.⁶ For the sake of providing our international students with a campus experience that is genuinely devoid of post-colonialism, it is necessary to engage in a process of decolonising of the curriculum.⁷



Photo: Shutterstock

By offering learners multiple ways to engage in class that go beyond the traditional 'raise your hand and answer' format, instructors can create inclusive conditions for the full spectrum of learners' diversity


A similar process is required to fully include Indigenous students and communities.⁸ From this perspective of decolonising the curriculum, the experiences and perceptions of Indigenous students and those of international students have much in common, and the way campuses must go about eroding ethnocentrism is arguably similar for both groups of students.

Although the current processes of internationalisation and indigenisation can appear *prima facie* to be contradictory in

the Canadian higher education context, in the sense that they represent a momentum towards opposite poles of globalisation and regionalisation, they also present a serendipitous opportunity to engage in a process of reflection on both processes simultaneously. There is also much room for campuses to blend their responses to the expectations of both groups of learners.⁹

—FREDERIC FOVET

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A large commercial airplane is shown from a low-angle perspective, flying directly towards the viewer. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow across the sky and the landscape below. The landscape features a winding river that flows through a valley, flanked by dense green forests and rolling hills. The overall scene conveys a sense of global travel and exploration.

AVIATION WITHOUT BORDERS

Programmes in highly technical fields like aeronautics and aviation, whose curricula are often constrained by national rules and regulations, face unique hurdles in internationalisation – even when the field in question is itself inherently international. At one American university, a partnership with a Greek airline has presented students with an unexpected opportunity to gain both practical international experience and an increased capacity to solve problems cross-culturally.

Everyone around the world is affected by aviation, whether one has actually flown in a plane or not. Consistently ranked among the best and largest aeronautics schools in the United States, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) is acutely aware of both the significance of aviation to global society, and the university's own role in contributing to the aviation and space industries, especially in this time of anticipated pilot and airline maintenance shortages in many parts of the world.

Aviation is carried out differently in different countries, regulated by separate governmental agencies and consortia across the world. Yet on a global scale, it all works: different cultures, speaking different languages, with different customs, working together each day to move millions of passengers safely from one location to another. Internationalising future aviation industry employees is a real challenge that ERAU's Office of Global Engagement is actively addressing, and they have found an enthusiastic – if unlikely – partner in one Greek airline.

NATIONAL CONSTRAINTS, INTERNATIONAL FIELD

Aviation in the USA is regulated by the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA), meaning that most, if not all, aspects of teaching and training at ERAU are US-centric. Students are taught the American way of aviation, and courses are taught according to the FAA requirements. This leaves little room for introducing an international component in the curriculum, despite the fact that our students who aspire to work in aviation will be working on the global stage.

With this in mind, over three years ago, the ERAU Office of Global Engagement and the Greek third-party travel provider Get Lost, Ltd, coordinated efforts to address the glaring gap between the industry's intrinsically international needs and the confines of national frameworks. The solution took the shape of a faculty-led, four-week study abroad programme that would be able, in keeping with FAA requirements, to offer an international experience to students who would not otherwise get the chance to see how aviation worked in other parts of the world, most notably Europe.

Through the coordination of Get Lost, inroads were made with Aegean Airlines, the largest Greek airline. This was a game-changer for students in the ERAU College of Aviation. Students who were studying Aeronautical Science, Aeronautics, Aviation Maintenance Science and more had an exciting new opportunity to finally go global and learn more about aviation operations under the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority (HCAA).

A STRATEGIC AVIATION PARTNERSHIP

Through the collaboration and dedication of ERAU faculty and staff, the support of Aegean Airlines senior employees, and the visionaries at Get Lost, Ltd, ERAU students learn more and become more globally-minded than they ever could have in a traditional classroom setting. Aegean has provided lectures, lessons, and real-life aviation scenarios and problems for students to study, review and apply creative thinking and classroom knowledge to in order to find solutions.

During one week of the four-week programme, ERAU students work alongside Aegean Airlines personnel. This is an in-depth and actively involved week that also includes on-site visits, tours of the Athens Airport, department briefings and visits, question-and-answer sessions,

In the remaining two weeks, students get to participate in a quintessentially Greek pastime: sailing.

For two weeks, students live aboard a sailboat exploring various islands, tasting the food, visiting sites and, more importantly, connecting with the Greek people.

The partnership with Aegean enables ERAU students to experience working cross-culturally, working through cultural differences in problem-solving and collaboration

time to talk to employees one-on-one and time to intimately get to know the inner workings of a highly successful European airline, which is not only surviving but flourishing in a country going through financial difficulties.

The culture of Aegean Airlines both facilitates students' own personal growth and prepares them for their future in the aviation industry. Ultimately, the partnership with Aegean enables ERAU students to experience working cross-culturally, working through cultural differences in problem-solving and collaboration. These are invaluable skills to attain early in one's life, skills that lead to future success in their chosen field of work and in the fabric of this global world.

FROM AMERICAN SKIES TO GREEK SEAS

To provide the full programme experience, in addition to working with Aegean Airlines for the week, students also get the chance to immerse themselves in Greek culture. One week of the programme is spent on land, visiting such sites as the UNESCO World Heritage site of Meteora and beautiful Zagoria.

During the whole experience, students do their learning outside the traditional boundaries of four classroom walls, taking classes on a boat, in a café, in an amphitheatre or perhaps a catacomb. This is global learning and exploration that fosters culturally aware individuals and good global citizens.

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Over the past three years, ERAU has sent almost 90 aviation-related students and six ERAU faculty members on the Aegean Airlines summer faculty-led study abroad programme. As of the writing of this article, 28 ERAU students and four faculty are currently abroad with the programme. In the past year, ERAU has received two visits from Aegean personnel to explore future collaborations, such as student internships at the airline, professional programmes and more.

ERAU and Aegean Airlines do not know what the future holds beyond the current study abroad programme, but the outlook for this American-Greek partnership is bright.

—SUE A. MACCHIARELLA



ERAU students at the Corinth Canal

Photo courtesy of author



SHORT-TERM PLACEMENTS FOR LONG-TERM IMPACT

The typical Irish vocational student lives at home and attends a college in one of Ireland's smaller towns or cities, where work placement opportunities in many fields can be scarce. How to train the Irish workforce to meet international demand and equip Irish students for an increasingly multicultural society? Short-term work placements abroad have proven a powerful – if unlikely – solution. ►

Each year since 2014, more than 700 vocational education and training (VET) students from Ireland have travelled to other countries in Europe for training placements. They are funded by Erasmus+, as part of its goal to enhance the international dimension of education and training. Looking at participants' responses in post-placement surveys, it seems that this purpose is being fulfilled.

Among 1275 participants who travelled for training placements between 2014 and 2016, 95% agreed or strongly agreed that they were better able to cooperate with people of different backgrounds and cultures, that they had better learned how to see the value of different cultures, and that they were more open-minded and curious. Over 93% were more tolerant of other persons' values and behaviour, while 97% were more able to adapt and act in new situations – an essential skill for operating in an international environment.

However, what's perhaps most remarkable about these results is this: 92% of these participants spent fewer than four weeks abroad.

BEYOND BOUNDARIES

Rather than travelling for academic study, these students took part in work-based training placements in local enterprises or organisations connected with their vocational area. In many cases, the placements were in environments that simply wouldn't have been available in their home regions – or even in their home country.

Many Irish vocational colleges are based in our smaller towns and cities, which can make it difficult to source suitable placements for students from particular courses. A project coordinator from Cavan Institute in the Irish Midlands commented that their animal management students had “received opportunities to work in settings that were difficult to gain in Ireland, such as small zoos and marine aquatic centres”, and that “the multimedia students had very positive experiences with their placements, which are not readily available in the Cavan region.”

In cases like these, travelling beyond the physical boundaries of Ireland allowed vocational students to also go beyond the boundaries of the Irish vocational system. It gave them access to a unique experience – and led them to realise that many other kinds of opportunities might be available to them. As one student succinctly put it, “Erasmus+ helped me realise I could live and study abroad, which is a big benefit for me, as it was a big question I had for my future.”

Many participants highlighted that the work placement was not only their first significant experience living abroad, but their first experience living away from home

A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

So how can a question that big be resolved in under a month? In a time when people in Europe routinely book cheap flights not only for holidays but also to



Nursing students from Galway Technical Institute on their Erasmus+ work placement in Sweden

travel for study and work, it can be difficult to remember that internationalisation does not come easily to everyone.

It's notable that many of the students who took part in these placements had not travelled extensively before. One project coordinator remarked that many of their students had “very limited, if any, experience and knowledge of traveling within the European Union. Certainly prior to this, few of them have travelled

independently of family.” Indeed, many participants highlighted that they lived with their parents – meaning the time spent on work placement was not only their first significant experience living



Vocational learners from Galway Technical Institute on their way to Erasmus+ work placements in Scotland and Finland

abroad, but also their first experience living away from home.

For students like these, an international experience can be profoundly transformative. They begin to realise that they are capable of surviving – or even thriving – away from their homes and support networks, and meeting and working alongside new people. This in turn builds self-confidence and self-esteem, and helps to expand career horizons.

A student from a small college of around 500 students remarked, “What I will take away from this experience is that it’s possible to work abroad, and I don’t have to be afraid of trying new things and experiencing the different cultures around the world. I would now like to study a new language.” There’s plenty of evidence from both students and project coordinators that this reaction is not unique. Many participants reported that they had gone on to work in other countries because of their placements; some even went back to work with their original host employers.

INTERNATIONALISING THE COMMUNITY

When groups of students begin to develop new international perspectives like this, the impact goes beyond the individuals themselves and expands to take in the vocational system that they came from.

If you’ve never left home before, two weeks abroad is huge – no matter where you go

The project coordinators I spoke to for this study reported effects ranging from redesigning their curricula to better meet the needs of international employers, to sending vocational staff for job shadowing and training to learn from and exchange practices with colleagues in Europe. According to one project coordinator in Coláiste Dhulaigh College of Further Education, Dublin, the experience of the


students reverberated across the whole organisation:

“The involvement in mobility has helped the college to be more aware of cultural diversity and to embrace the students with different ethnic backgrounds and to treat them equally and with respect. Not only does this impact positively on the increased diversity in our student population, integrating members of other cultural backgrounds more into our college community, but it also carries internationalisation outside the college into the wider community, thus fostering intercultural awareness, mutual understanding and respect for each other within Irish society as a whole.”

In this instance, international work experience became a powerful catalyst for reflection on intercultural relations, not only among participants but also within their sending organisations. Supporting students to take part in exchange programmes like Erasmus+ is a real opportunity for organisations to strengthen not only international connections but also intercultural relationships, and help to build a society that is more aware and respectful of diversity.

If this seems a lot to lay at the door of a short stay abroad, bear in mind the words of one of the researchers on the recent ‘Widening Participation in UK Outward Student Mobility’ project from Universities UK International: “If you’ve never left home before, two weeks abroad is huge – no matter where you go.”

— CHARIS HUGHES



SIBERIA'S UNEX

Internationalisation is taking place not only in cosmopolitan global cities, but also in more remote regions. Can institutions on the geographic periphery take centre stage in the higher education landscape? In Siberia, several institutions are demonstrating that a far-flung location doesn't have to be a barrier to international appeal – and that sometimes, it can even be an asset.

Often perceived as a vast, cold territory or an isolated landmass permanently covered with snow, Siberia undoubtedly presents a traditionally overlooked and somewhat unexpected location for internationalisation in higher education. However, despite being located on Russia's geographic periphery, Siberian institutions in many ways take centre stage in the Russian higher education landscape.

Four Siberian universities are participating in the national Academic Excellence Project, also known as Project 5-100, which aims to increase the international competitiveness of Russian universities. Their goal is to move beyond the typical associations of isolation and permafrost to reveal the other side of a region with a more than hundred-year-long tradition of academic excellence.

COMPETING WITH THE URBAN CORE

Regional higher education institutions, and even more so those located at the periphery of the country, are often considered to be second-tier universities. Considering Siberia encompasses a vast territory that stretches from the Russian Ural Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, the assumption that the region's educational institutions may not be competitive with those located in a major city is understandable. However, several Siberian universities prove otherwise.

The first higher education institution in Siberia – Tomsk State National Research University (TSU) – was established in 1878, and today ranks among the top Russian universities, performing on par with the best institutions in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. If competing with the quality offered by the major urban universities isn't a problem, how can universities like TSU overcome the challenge of their remote location to advance internationalisation?



Photo: Istock

UNEXPECTED APPEAL

LEVERAGING LOCATION

For starters, Siberian universities can use the region's unique characteristics to their advantage. Given the ecosystem and history of Siberia, universities there can position themselves in a specific niche and develop their international profiles by focusing on research areas such as climate change, biodiversity, archaeology and ethnography.

TSU took this approach when they established an international platform for the exploration and study of the Siberian region, the Trans-Siberian Scientific Way (TSSW) Research Centre. The TSSW Research Centre serves as a repository of information about the region. It also

provides opportunities for collaboration between international and Russian institutions interested in studying Siberia across various disciplines.

The Siberian Environmental Change Network (SecNet) was created as a part of the TSSW. With climate change being a growing concern worldwide, TSU positions itself as a research laboratory for monitoring some of the climate changes that happen in the region, changes that can also affect other countries.

Foreign scientists can gain access to three important research stations in the region by collaborating with TSU. This has already stimulated interest from scientists from Tokyo Metropolitan

University, who are engaging in various joint projects with TSU. This year, the two universities signed a memorandum of strategic partnership.

COLLABORATING WITH THE CITY

For universities in remote geographic locations it is especially important to work together with municipal governments to create a more attractive urban environment. Common internationalisation objectives and shared collective approaches that can enhance the internationalisation of the entire community are good starting points for such a collaboration between a university and city.

As home to six universities and eleven research institutes of the Russian Academy of Sciences, higher education institutions are a big part of Tomsk's identity. It is often said that, despite being one of the oldest cities in Siberia, Tomsk remains young, with one in eight residents of the city being a student. Given this large student population,

Given the ecosystem and history of Siberia, universities there develop their international profiles by focusing on research areas such as climate change, biodiversity, archaeology and ethnography



The University Cities Forum in Tomsk



A session at TEDx Tomsk State University

a growing institutional focus on higher education internationalisation, and the presence of two universities participating in the 5-100 Project, Tomsk inevitably needs to become more accessible to international students and scholars.

Universities can help to lead the change. Since 2016, TSU's TSSW Research Centre has organised an annual International University Cities Forum. The Forum – supported by the Administration of the Tomsk Region as well as by the Embassy of France in Russia and the Consulate General of Germany in Siberia – presents an international platform for collaboration between universities, city government and industry representatives. More importantly, the Forum also gives students a voice in discussions surrounding how universities and cities can be of better use to one another, ideas which are being considered in the International Student Event 'UNI4CITY'.

Not only has the internationalisation of TSU led to changes on campus (*eg* bilingual signs on campus in Russian and English), it has also produced a spill-over effect on the city's social life. For example, the Administration of Tomsk Region made the city's navigation system and announcements on the public transport bilingual. There is now a cinema that shows

movies in English with Russian subtitles. TSU's language clubs are open to the public and their events are often held off campus, in some of Tomsk's popular meeting spots. Tomsk residents also have the opportunity to get acquainted with foreign cultures through various cultural events organised by TSU international students from Vietnam, Laos and China.

SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Effective internationalisation in remote geographic locations undoubtedly requires special support and cultural adaptation for foreign students and academics. There are currently more than 2200 international students from 54 countries studying at TSU. The growing number of international students – and even more so the diversity of countries that they represent – created a need for international student support services. In 2014, TSU launched a project called 'International Student Service Centre', which later became a full-fledged university department.

As a part of the International Student Service Centre at TSU, students set up a volunteer group called 'TSU online' to help international students before and after they arrive in Tomsk. Student volunteers manage transfers from the airport, introduction weeks and campus tours.

They help newly arrived international students get settled in the dormitories and even make sure they buy warm clothes. Students also serve as a point of contact for social and cultural activities in Tomsk and TSU. They organise year-round events such as city quests (introducing international students to the city, its history and environment), language events (*eg* Russian speaking club), a language exchange café and more.

IMPACTS ON THE UNIVERSITY

Such opportunities for interaction between local and international students strengthen the international culture at the university. While the international students at TSU feel welcome and supported despite being far away from their home countries, local students learn about different cultures and languages.

This institutional environment, by being so supportive of internationalisation, promotes the exchange of ideas and greater student engagement. For example, one of the TSU's international students initiated an independent TEDx event this year, 'TEDx Tomsk State University'. This successful event saw 12 students from five countries present on a variety of topics, and is something that TSU hopes to continue in the future.

The internationalisation initiatives at TSU highlight the need for universities in remote geographic locations to advance internationalisation by focusing on their local context, finding their unique niche, collaborating with their city, and engaging the university's best resource – its students.

— DINA UZHEGOVA & EVA BURBO

UNIVERSITY ALLIANCES ALONG THE NEW SILK ROAD

China's historic Belt and Road Initiative is linking not only infrastructure and economies across the historic Silk Road, but also higher education institutions. Through a series of strategic university alliances stretching from Pacific to Atlantic across the Eurasian continent, China hopes to shift the centre of gravity in international higher education. ▶



The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road, also known as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or One Belt One Road (OBOR), is one of China's key initiatives in the Xi Jin Ping era. First launched in late 2013, the numbers are impressive, with trillions of dollars in investment spread across several continents and affecting 65% of the world's population.

The term 'Silk Road' covers a broad expanse of territory stretching across the Eurasian continent. From Xi'an (Chang'an) through present-day Xinjiang to Dunhuang, the historic Silk Road split along either side of the Taklamakan Desert, downwards through Kashmir to present-day India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and ended in Damascus or as far as Marco Polo's Venice. The modern Belt and Road Initiative seeks to reconnect those lines and extend them even further: as of January 2017, a BRI-funded freight train line runs from Yiwu in Zhejiang province to London. There is also a freight link from Yiwu to Madrid, now the longest freight train line in the world.

So, how has this initiative, an overarching keystone of Chinese foreign policy, affected universities? One unexpected outcome has been the rapid emergence of university partnerships across national borders and distant lines of longitude, tilting the orientation of Eurasian higher education ever eastward towards China.

CROSS-BORDER COLLABORATIONS

All along the expanse of the historic and modern Silk Roads, universities are



Xi'an Jiaotong University

banding together to share knowledge and pools of talent in the name of the BRI. So far there are at least five main networks of Silk Road university consortia, alliances and networks initiated by Chinese universities, with some smaller groupings as well.

Hong Kong. There are also five Russian universities, five from Kazakhstan, three from Kyrgyzstan, and one each from Poland, Finland, Tajikistan, Thailand and Turkey.

Xi'an Jiaotong University held the inaugural conference of the Silk Road

The new alliance also formalised its dedication to the spirit of the Silk Road – peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit

The first to initiate such a network was Xi'an Jiaotong University, a major Chinese university ranked 12th by QS. Their alliance is composed of just under 50 universities, mostly research or technical universities, including the universities of Liverpool, Aberdeen, Politecnico di Milano, the National University of Singapore and the University of

Universities Alliance in May 2015. The new alliance also issued the Xi'an Declaration, formalising a dedication "to contribute to the common development of civilisation and open collaboration in higher education", based on "the spirit of the Silk Road – peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit".

Several more alliances and university networks have developed along the Silk Road. Next was the Business School of Beijing Foreign Studies University. In June 2016, the Business School of Beijing Foreign Studies University founded the Alliance of Silk Road Business Schools, with membership mostly from China, the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Next was North West Agricultural and Forestry University, (NWAUFU) from Yangling, just outside of Xi'an. In November 2016, North West Agricultural and Forestry University (NWAUFU) in Yangling hosted the inaugural meeting of the Silk Road Agricultural Education Innovation and Research Alliance, whose inaugural group included some 60 Chinese universities and some 15 foreign universities, including the University of Jordan, Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Italy), one from Poland, one from Serbia, and several from Kazakhstan and Russia. The International Research Centre for Agriculture in the Dry Areas (ICADA) from Rabat (Morocco) was also represented.

THE THREE ALLIANCES

In November 2017 Shaanxi Normal University (SNNU), a well-respected university in Xi'an, hosted the 'Three Alliances': The Silk Road Teacher Education Alliance, the Humanities and Social Science Alliance, and the Book Archives Alliance. There was also the launch of the 'Silk Road Russian Publishing Translation Base'. In attendance were representatives of teacher training universities from Uzbekistan, Moscow, Taiwan, Tajikistan and other countries, as well as each

training universities from nearby Gansu and Xinjiang Provinces.

According to the organisers, the establishment of the Three Alliances "aims at fostering a group of high-quality, multi-functional, and international companies through cooperative education, student exchange, mutual recognition of credits, construction of educational practice bases, scientific research cooperation, and sharing of book publishing resources among participating companies."

The Silk Road initiative represents an effort to create international academic cooperation along new pathways, away from the traditional focus on the Anglosphere and Western Europe

The conference was attended by a plethora of officials from the Shaanxi provincial Ministry of Education and the Shaanxi Provincial People's congress. One official said that "The theme of this conference is to build a humane community of education and promote the common people in the Silk Road."

ACADEMIC COOPERATION IN THE CHANGING GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

The existence, as well as the many unexpected successes and difficulties, of these

groupings dovetails with the observations of those who say we are moving, sometimes painfully, to a multipolar world. As the orientation of global society shifts, it makes sense that this would manifest itself in the sphere of education as well. The Silk Road initiative represents an effort to create international academic cooperation along new pathways, away from the traditional focus on the Anglosphere and Western Europe.

In this, the Chinese are not alone, but the Chinese multi-pronged initiative is clearly the most energetic and ambitious of the lot. Indeed, the speed of implementation alone is striking, with all of these Chinese-led alliances having arisen in less than two years. By comparison, the existing architecture of international academic relations in the Anglosphere and Eurocentric world has arisen over decades. As for whether these Eurasian networks will eventually have the same impact on international higher education as their counterparts in Europe and North America, only time will tell.

— MELVIN WEIGEL

A portrait of Paul Arthur Berkman, a man with a mustache and glasses, wearing a dark suit, blue shirt, and patterned tie. He is smiling and standing in front of a background of various national flags. The text "IN CONVERSATION WITH" is overlaid in white, and "PAUL ARTHUR BERKMAN" is overlaid in large blue letters.

IN CONVERSATION WITH

PAUL ARTHUR BERKMAN

LAURA RUMBLEY
EAIE

Paul Arthur Berkman is Professor of Practice in Science Diplomacy and Director of the Science Diplomacy Center at Tufts University based at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. His work in the international spaces beyond and between the borders of sovereign nations, from the high seas to Antarctica, highlights the need for international cooperation in often overlooked, and therefore ‘unexpected’, parts of the globe. In our interview with Paul, he discusses the roles of science diplomacy and education in addressing the common challenges facing our world.

What exactly is ‘science diplomacy’ and why are international relations important to the scientific community (or why *should* they be)?

PB: I think the notion of ‘science’ is the study of change. For the benefit of the world we live in, our challenge as educators is to develop the generations of skilled, informed decision-makers. Hopefully the most skilled informed decision-makers will become the leaders of nations, the leaders of societies, leaders in our world. It’s not about whether they make right or wrong decisions, good or bad decisions – it’s about making informed decisions.

Our challenge as educators is to develop the generations of skilled, informed decision-makers

A good illustration of this is the Paris Accord. It’s a polarising topic, so one of the skills of science diplomacy is to sit in a neutral position, recognising the science diplomat operates without decision-making capacity. Whenever you have two agendas, you create a political discussion, and part of the challenge is to avoid such political discussions, because they’re largely unproductive and they’re operating on a time scale that is reactive rather than informed.

That’s where the diplomacy comes in, offering options and evidence that can be either used or ignored by decision-makers explicitly, but without advocacy. Part of the idea of an informed decision is that it operates across a ‘continuum of urgencies’ corresponding to the scale of the issue, impact or resources involved. There is a continuum of urgencies at the scale of an individual as well as for our world, operating from security time scales that are immediate to sustainability time scales across generations. Informed decision-making is something that can be taught to an individual as well as to the world at the same time.

The concept of an informed decision is that the whole process starts with questions, and these questions are delivered in an international, interdisciplinary and inclusive manner. When these questions become questions of common concern, then it raises the issue of what the methods are to answer those questions. Those questions of common concern need to be answered with methods from the natural sciences, social sciences and indigenous knowledge, all of which study change, revealing patterns and trends that become the bases for decisions.

Your work has been focused in many ways on regions of the world that are defined as being beyond sovereign jurisdiction. How does the practice of international relations work in those kinds of contexts?

PB: Excellent, this is one of my favourite things to talk about! Nations account for about 30% of the

earth's surface, and then we have areas that are beyond national boundaries, that are designated under international law as 'international spaces': the high seas, the deep sea, Antarctica, outer space. These are areas beyond sovereign jurisdiction.

After World War Two, it was recognised that a source of conflict in the world was national interests, nationalism, and as a consequence the world agreed to set regions beyond sovereign jurisdictions. In effect, what they were doing was removing sources of conflict: national interests and

common interests for the benefit of all on Earth across generations.

The EAIE is focused specifically on the internationalisation of higher education. What role do higher education institutions and stakeholders play in the work you do and how important are universities in terms of advancing key science diplomacy objectives?

PB: I think universities actually have a very special role in the world that is not yet developed: they are bastions of

increase just since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The only reason climate is an issue is because there are a lot of us on Earth, reflecting our globally-interconnected civilisation.

Planetary issues operate not on a political time scale, but across generations. If we're dealing with climate, we have to operate at the time scale of climate changes, which is certainly cross-generational. So if you think about a solution that operates on that scale, it's not a single agreement – the Paris Accord of 2015 isn't going to solve things that happen a generation in the future – but rather it's a moment in that time frame. If you think about what the solution looks like, it's an iterative process.

Part of the challenge in this journey to balance national interests and common interests is to figure out how to contribute to this process and to stabilise the process itself. I see levels of skill that can be trained at early stages of child development. Starting in elementary school, the ideas of questions, data, evidence, options and informed decisions can all be progressively

The challenge we face as a civilisation at a planetary scale is one of balancing national interests and common interests

sovereign jurisdictions involved defence and maintenance of those boundaries, so by designating regions beyond sovereign jurisdictions it was potentially reducing the potential for planetary conflict.

Now if you look at these international spaces, in effect you have on one side national interests defined by nations, and then you have international spaces that are defined in terms of common interests. The challenge we face as a civilisation at a planetary scale is one of balancing national interests and common interests. This challenge will exist as long as there are nations on Earth, always first and foremost looking after their national interests. I see the essence of science diplomacy as an international, interdisciplinary and inclusive process involving informed decision-making, with the purpose to balance national interests and

objectivity. They are in a place without the agendas of government, without the agendas of industry, and without the agendas of non-governmental organisations. They serve in a neutral place to be able to convene dialogues among allies and adversaries alike.

Universities serve in a neutral place to be able to convene dialogues among allies and adversaries alike

Going back to the Paris Accord, it's a political lightning rod, yet what underlies the Paris Accord is really very interesting, and it isn't climate. Climate is a proxy for global human population size and growth, approaching eight billion people on Earth this decade, a nearly 1000%

introduced through students' educations with all of us as life-long learners.

To ask what a successful education is for any graduate of any university, I would say it means that they're able to teach themselves. So what are the basic rudiments to do that? It all starts



Photos courtesy of Paul Arthur Berkman

with asking questions, recognising that inquiry is the essence of science and understanding change. Questions then reveal methods to answer them in an iterative cascade of learning. As Socrates imagined, we each can grow throughout a lifetime just based on questions, answers and refinement. I think these are the gifts we can give our students.

When you reflect on your own trajectory as an academic, did you set out to have a highly internationalised career, or was it an ‘unexpected’ turn of events that led you into global conversations as a scientist?

PB: For me the journey started when I was 10 years old or so. I knew at that stage that the dimensions of this journey were international and interdisciplinary. By the time I was 30, I’d been to all seven continents, having spent a year in Antarctica when I was 22 and truly walking off the edge of the earth. So yes – global has always been a core part of my life.

As I’ve mentioned, my perspective is that the characteristics of science diplomacy are international, interdisciplinary and inclusive. The international and interdisciplinary dimensions are easier to grasp, but I think the biggest challenge by far

is with inclusion – inclusion of different time frames, different sociocultural dynamics, different environmental circumstances, different priorities, backgrounds, histories. What I’ve learned is the hardest part of the puzzle is inclusion. I think for all of us, that’s where the most important contributions will emerge.

THE SURPRISING PULL OF POLAND'S MEDICAL SCHOOLS

The former Eastern Bloc may seem an unlikely destination for medical studies, but trends in Poland tell a different tale. In a country that a few short decades ago was but a blip on the international education radar, Polish medical schools are punching above their weight on the world stage. Where once the challenge was attracting international students, now the question is what happens after they graduate.

At the end of June 2014, a viral video spread across Polish social media and internet sites. It was made by a recent Swedish graduate of the Wrocław Medical University, Sven Larsson, and had over a hundred thousand views on Vimeo within just a week of its upload. After spending six years studying at a Polish medical university, Sven decided to sum up this time of his life by making a movie about Poland and his *alma mater*, which would serve to showcase what was one of the most wonderful periods in his life. In the movie we can see the cities of Krakow, Zakopane, Czestochowa, and in the spotlight, Sven's beloved Wrocław, with buildings of the university and the university clinical hospital.

INTERNATIONALISATION IN POLAND

Sven was recommended to study medicine in Wrocław by a friend from Sweden, who had already been a student in Poland at the time. While internationalisation has begun to take hold in Poland



Photo: Istock

in recent decades, it's worth mentioning that the role of Polish universities in the context of internationalisation has for a long time been marginal.

It wasn't until the 1950s that the – initially insignificant – inflow of foreign students to Poland began.¹ For a relatively long time, the number of those students remained low, never exceeding three thousand until the 1980s.² The 1990s and the political and economic opening of the former Eastern Bloc, followed by the implementation of programmes such as Erasmus, encouraged Polish students to study abroad more frequently, but inbound mobility during that time was a very distant prospect for Polish higher education.

One cannot miss the dynamic of the increasing number of foreign students coming to Poland: from 2008–2018, the ratio of international students increased from less than 1% to over 10%

Now, as is shown by the data of the Central Statistical Office for the academic year 2017/2018, there are about 70,000 foreign students in Poland. Although compared to the most internationalised systems of higher education in the world this number is still small, and the phenomenon itself is still new to Polish universities, one cannot miss the dynamic of the increasing number

of foreign students coming to Poland: during the years 2008–2018, the ratio of international students increased from less than 1% to over 10%.

INDISPUTABLE LEADERS OF INTERNATIONALISATION

One of the most numerous in this group are students of medical universities. Currently there are more than 7000 of

them, which results in medical universities having an internationalisation ratio of more than 11%. Several years prior to the beginning of this dynamic increase in foreign students pursuing their education in Poland, and before domestic academia along with the Polish government took measures to promote it, this trend had already been pointed out by foreign media: in 2013 the *New York Times* observed that, according to the data published by the OECD, foreign medical students accounted for 30% of all international students in Poland.³

Medical schools in Poland began to transform themselves much earlier, and thanks to this, they have held the position of indisputable leaders of internationalisation

As Grzegorz Chewusz from Center for Medical Education in English at Poznan University of Medical Sciences (PUMPS) explains: “Due to the great popularity of this branch of education, medical schools in Poland have facilitated work in this area and begun to transform themselves much earlier. Of course, these favourable conditions had to be created and it required unlimited vision in post-transformation Poland. Thanks to this, medical schools have held the position of indisputable leaders of internationalisation.”

This trend is due to the exceptional efforts of the medical universities, which several years ago undertook a number of activities aimed at even more effective

promotion and recruitment. For example, the Berlin Medical Academy, in cooperation with Polish universities, conducts pre-medicine courses, better preparing students to pass the exams and offering them a head start in the first years of their medical education. Universities also organise exams abroad – a good example is Medical University of Gdansk (MUG), which has regular examination sessions in Sweden, Norway, India and the UAE, as well as occasionally in Canada, the USA, Germany, Hungary and the UK. The university currently cooperates with six

recruitment agencies, reaching candidates from such faraway countries like Bahrain, Ivory Coast and Kuwait.

LEARNING FROM THE SCHOOL OF LIFE

When most foreign students begin their studies in Poland, they see it as a country completely alien to them, even slightly intimidating. This can also be true for students with Polish roots, as was the case with Lukasz Lyzwinski. “I had a moment of doubt just before flying out. It was because of some negative stories I heard from people who left during the communist times, but as soon as I arrived in Poznan, I unpacked and took a walk from the dorms to the old Town Square and I knew that I made the right choice,” says Lukasz.

Lukasz decided to take up studies in Poland already after he had begun his education in Montreal. He points out that medical studies in Poland require considerably more independence than comparable studies in the USA or Canada. “The educational system is very different to the American approach. Students have many more responsibilities in preparing to go back to North America. The University does not give a lot of support in preparing for the licensing exams or on counseling how the process of getting residence in the US works. A lot of that is left to the student to figure out themselves. [...] It’s a good school of life, teaching you how to take care of yourself.”

This “school of life” seems to bring good results to the future doctors: “We often hear from our graduates that their initial fears about starting an internship, eg in the USA or Canada, are quickly dispelled, when it turns out that their knowledge and skills as compared to their peers are no worse, and often even stand out positively. We also have a good comparison in the results of license examinations for PUMS graduates, in which they perform better statistically than graduates from other schools all over the world,” says Chewusz.

PULL FACTORS

Data from 2017 confirms that the popularity of Polish medical universities among foreign students compared to, for example, Germany is proportionally very high. The share of foreigners in higher education for medical science in Germany ranges at 10%, while in Poland it is more than 20%.⁴ Does this mean that

Polish medical schools are competitive in terms of quality, or is it just the price that makes them so attractive to foreign candidates?

Thanks to large investments in infrastructure, acquisition of eminent scientists from around the world and the accreditation of the American NCFMEA,⁵ medical education in Poland has a lot to offer its international candidates. According to

studies is not only a great success but also a source of new challenges for the Polish higher education system. The next big question facing Poland is whether it wants to keep its well-educated international graduates in the country and enable them to develop their careers there. Current barriers in the healthcare job market show that the system is not prepared for the increasing number of foreign

The next big question facing Poland is whether it wants to keep its well-educated international graduates in the country and enable them to develop their careers there

Dr Tomasz Hryszko, Deputy Dean for the Development of the Department and English Language Teaching at the Medical Faculty of the Medical University of Białystok (MUB), the accreditation in particular “is a strong, clear signal for the world of science that medical education in Poland is at a very high level. Prolongation of accreditation is an important testimony, especially in the context of a large advantage of American universities in global rankings like the Shanghai list.” Prof Maria Dudziak, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Gdansk, also adds that five Polish medical universities are positioned among the Shanghai rankings, including her own institution.

NEW CHALLENGES: RETAINING INTERNATIONAL GRADUATES

This dynamic unexpected scale of internationalisation in the field of medical

graduates, *eg* obligatory Polish language exams to obtain a full authorisation to practice the profession and less favourable working conditions compared to Western countries. Taking up this challenge and initiating new projects in order to create a fully internationalised and symbiotic system that responds to this trend should be the next step.

“Given the personnel shortages in the Polish medical service, all integrated efforts possible should be made towards a policy conducive to international medical graduates remaining in Poland, as these are young, talented, hard-working and valuable people, who are worth fighting for,” says Prof Dudziak.

— MAGDALENA KOZULA & ALEKSANDRA
DASZKOWSKA-KAMINSKA

1. Żołędowski, *Studenci zagraniczni w Polsce. Motywy przyjazdu, ocena pobytu, plany na przyszłość* (Foreign students in Poland. The reasons for coming, evaluation of stay, plans for the future), Warsaw 2010, p. 54.

2. Data from the Central Statistical Office; following the work of: P. Hut, E. Jaroszevska, *Studenci zagraniczni w Polsce na tle migracji edukacyjnych na świecie. Badania. Ekspertyzy. Rekomendacje* (Foreign students in Poland compared to educational migration in the world. Research. Studies. Recommendations.), 2011, www.isp.org.pl/uploads/pdf/772873926.pdf

3. C.F. Schuetze (Aug 2013). Medical students head to Eastern Europe, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/12/world/europe/medical-students-head-to-eastern-Europe.html>

4. Presented data comes from Central Statistical Office in Poland, Federal Statistical Office in Germany.

5. National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation.

An illustration on a solid blue background featuring three hands holding magnifying glasses. The hands are rendered in a simple, flat style with orange skin and red handles. One hand is at the top right, another at the middle left, and the third at the bottom right. The magnifying glasses are dark blue with white highlights on the lenses. The word 'UNUSUAL' is written in large, bold, white capital letters, and 'SUSPECTS' is written in large, bold, dark blue capital letters. The magnifying glass in the center is positioned over the word 'UNUSUAL'. Below the main title, the words 'IN INTERNATIONALISATION' are written in smaller, white capital letters, underlined with a white horizontal line.

UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

IN INTERNATIONALISATION

Internationalisation is often thought to belong to the realm of universities, but do opportunities for building intercultural competence have to be so limited? In the Netherlands, unexpected internationalisation of ‘unusual suspects’ – from primary school classrooms to digital platforms – highlights both the need and the potential for a more holistic approach to internationalisation.

In a 2014 letter to parliament on the topic of internationalisation of higher education, the Dutch Minister of Education stated that students should be trained as what she called “competent rebels”: thinkers and doers who are able to promote change through a combination of creativity, courage and ambition. More recently, the Ministry followed up by emphasising that education sectors – from vocational schools to primary education – should better learn from each other’s best practices, including the achievements of secondary schools in the field of bilingual education.

Internationalisation is not just for higher education, and not just for students who are able to study abroad: as our society becomes more international, the focus is shifting away from the ‘usual suspects’ such as research universities and universities of applied sciences, to a more holistic embrace of the education system as a whole as a cultivator of interculturally competent rebels.

EARLY FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

No fewer than one in five primary schools in the Netherlands – about 1400 schools – offer up to 15% of teaching time (3.5 hours per week) in English, French or German. This *vroeg vreemdetalenonderwijs*, or early foreign language learning, started in the 1990s and has since become increasingly popular. Of these schools, 90% offer only English, while the other 10% also offer German or French. These foreign languages are also applied and integrated in daily activities or in subjects such as music, physical education, geography and history.

There has been some concern about the potential negative consequences of early foreign language learning for the students themselves. Does the use of foreign languages not hinder the development of their native language skills? However, research funded by the Dutch government shows that teaching in a foreign language does not impair students’ learning of Dutch.¹ The students at these early foreign language schools sometimes even achieve slightly better scores in Dutch tests than students of other schools.

Bilingual education has two goals: fluent and adequate command of a second language and broadening cultural horizons for personal development

BILINGUAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

Likewise at the level of secondary and vocational education more and more schools offer bilingual education. Bilingual education has two goals: fluent and adequate command of a second language and broadening cultural horizons for personal development, which is emphasised in the curriculum of the schools.

Research by Nuffic, the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education, shows that bilingual education gives students more confidence for their further education.² More than 37,000 students take at

least half of their classes in English at 130 secondary schools across the Netherlands. Whereas 81.4% of graduates of bilingual education programmes do not expect problems with language in their future studies, a substantially lower 57.9% of students who did not follow bilingual education share their confidence. Additionally, students of bilingual education have more plans to go abroad for their studies than students at non-bilingual secondary schools.

into the classroom: for example, students can learn how to bake bread like they do in France, by exchanging knowledge online with their peers in France.

One of the programmes that facilitates international experience for home students is eTwinning, an online community for primary, secondary and vocational education through which teachers and students can collaborate with their peers and colleagues in more than 30 European countries. This kind of digital collabo-

and secondary school classrooms to the office of the Minister of Education. Yet, rather unexpectedly, there is still no continuity in internationalisation across the various levels of schooling: vocational schools are not aware of internationalisation initiatives at secondary schools, and in turn, secondary schools are not always attuned to primary schools' internationalisation curriculum.

Led by Nuffic, the 'Internationalisation for all' initiative works towards fostering cross-sectoral continuity in language development and global competence. The project aims to achieve concrete goals, such as instating a continuous learning trajectory for studying English and amending laws and regulations that hinder the continuity of curriculum between education sectors.

Alongside the successful initiatives within each level of the Dutch education system, 'Internationalisation for all' aims to ensure that internationalisation in the Netherlands isn't limited to the usual suspects. By equipping all students in each sector of the education system with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes, we can rise to the call of cultivating competent rebels who can live, study and work in our global society, and ultimately change it for the better.

—PIETER VERBEEK & EVELINE VAN ENGELN

Internationalisation is for every student – also for those who never cross a national border

INTERNATIONALISATION AT HOME AND VET

Vocational education and training (VET) is preparing for a globalising international labour market and intercultural society. In shops, cafés and companies, employees need skills to give service to a growing number of international customers. It is important that students develop intercultural awareness, so that they understand that something that is common to Dutch people may be experienced very differently by someone with another cultural background. It also helps them if they choose to continue their studies in higher education.

Internationalisation is for every student – also for those who never cross a national border. Going abroad on a work placement is one form of internationalisation, but there are many more ways to bring vocational education students into contact with other countries and cultures. Digital forms of education can help bring an international dimension

into the classroom: for example, students can learn how to bake bread like they do in France, by exchanging knowledge online with their peers in France. With eTwinning, students at all levels of education look across the border and actively build up their intercultural competences without ever leaving the classroom.

The fact that not all students currently have the same opportunities to study abroad is partly due to socioeconomic factors: children of highly educated and wealthier parents often have more opportunities. Focusing on internationalisation at home is one way to offer international experiences to greater numbers of students, producing more opportunities for all and cultivating a better-educated workforce of even more competent rebels.

INTERNATIONALISATION FOR ALL

So we have seen that internationalisation is high on the agenda in every layer of the Dutch education system, from primary

1. www.nuffic.nl/documents/577/evaluatie-pilot-tweetalig-primair-onderwijs-vervolgmeting.pdf

2. www.nuffic.nl/documents/298/tweetalig-onderwijs-in-het-voortgezet-onderwijs.pdf

INVESTING EARLY IN A GLOBAL WORKFORCE

Governments across the world are learning the lesson that internationalisation cannot achieve its most ambitious goals when limited to higher education. In Japan, remaining competitive in the global economy necessitates developing a globally competent workforce with the skills and perspectives to work across borders. And to maximise the impact of internationalisation, they're starting young. ►



In Japan, internationalisation is not just taking place within higher education – it's happening at every level of the national school system. To meet the needs of Japanese industries competing at the global level, Japan's government aims to cultivate 100,000 'Global Jinzai', or globally competent citizens, per year. These citizens are being equipped with a broader perspective, which should enable them to communicate and cooperate with people from different cultural and social backgrounds.

To this end, the Japanese government is encouraging schools and universities to join forces and provide their students with learning environments enriched with international experiences throughout their 'K–16 education', or the 16 years from kindergarten through the completion of their undergraduate education.

their education in order to meet these new goals.

Collaborating with domestic or overseas universities is mandatory. For example, pupils of SGHs complete some undergraduate modules at partner universities. These universities also send their faculty members or foreign students to attend various lectures and seminars at SGHs. Faculty members are involved in curriculum development or teacher training courses offered at SGHs as well. In addition, both national and private universities have introduced an entrance examination for candidates recommended by SGHs.¹

COLLABORATING VERTICALLY AND HORIZONTALLY

Collaboration between schools and universities has also been encouraged by the

Furthermore, MEXT aims to increase the number of International Baccalaureate (IB) schools in Japan by 200 this year. Japanese universities are increasingly interested in recruiting graduates of the IB Diploma Programme (DP) because they have acquired intercultural capabilities and can contribute to the internationalisation of university campuses, as well as improving the quality of education. The entrance examination for IB graduates has been introduced by several Japanese universities. One of the national universities offers a core DP subject – Theory of Knowledge – at the undergraduate level, as it is useful for all students regardless of their specialties. This initiative further strengthens the link between IB schools and university education.

MEXT has published new curriculum guidelines for all levels of schools, to be put into practice from 2020 onwards. The guidelines suggest that by the time pupils complete K–12 (high school) education, they should have acquired the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed in a rapidly changing and unpredictable age, one shaped by the advancement of globalisation and technological innovation. Schools are asked to reinforce a vertical link by setting educational goals at each level (pre, primary, junior high and high schools) in a systematic order, and to provide children and pupils with learning opportunities and assessment of their progress throughout K–12. Likewise, universities are expected to review and adapt their admission policies, entrance examination systems and educational curricula in order to be consistent with K–12 education

These citizens are being equipped with a broader perspective, which should enable them to communicate and cooperate with people from different cultural and social backgrounds

SUPER GLOBAL HIGH SCHOOLS

In 2014, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) launched the Super Global High School (SGH) programme. Their aim is to cultivate globalised leaders whose intercultural competencies enable them to play active roles in the globalising society. A total of 123 schools have been designated as SGHs and provided with financial support to restructure

UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet), which as of 2017 links over 1000 preschools, elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools, schools for special needs education and teacher training colleges in Japan with other educational institutions across the world. This network enables them to share information and experiences, and develop educational curricula and methods that help young people to better deal with global issues.²

and enable students to further develop what they have learned at school.

IMPLEMENTING CURRICULAR CHANGE

However, implementing these guidelines will be a big challenge for schools and universities in Japan, as they have not traditionally been well connected to each other. In fact, a survey on ASPnet conducted in 2016 revealed that around 70% of UNESCO schools in Japan had no support from any university.² This might

programme from kindergarten through the IB programmes – including the Primary Years, Middle Years and Diploma Programmes. Tamagawa Academy has been an SGH since 2014 and is a member of Round Square, a global network of innovative schools in 50 countries.

A consistent educational programme is being developed by a committee for the promotion of the K–16 curriculum and K–16 Education Research Centre. Learning objectives regarding cross-cultural

mental/non-governmental organisations. Universities should be at the centre of such networks, where their members share experiences and issues, deepen mutual understanding and work together to cultivate globally competent citizens. Such an organic collaboration enables them to set common educational goals and create consistent curricula from the perspective of K–16, or maybe even K–16 plus (including adult education or in-company training). By providing children opportunities to accumulate international experiences starting from an early stage, they will gradually acquire the abilities and competencies necessary to become the Global Jinzai that fuel the Japanese and world economy.

—HIROYUKI TAKAGI

By the time pupils complete K-12 education, they should have acquired the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed in a rapidly changing and unpredictable age

be caused by a lack of interest in learning from experiences at other educational levels, an issue that has been recognised in other countries, too. In the Netherlands, this absence of dialogue between education sectors has also been noted, despite the importance of communication regarding internationalisation, for which each sector has its own interests and concerns.³

Curriculum development from a K–16 perspective is gradually advancing in Japan, particularly among universities and their associated schools. A good example can be found in Tokyo. Tamagawa Academy (a K–12 school) and Tamagawa University have been promoting a K–16 curriculum, taking advantage of one campus in which all of their schools and faculties are located. Tamagawa Academy offers the Japanese–English bilingual

tural communication skills in the English language are currently being set at each educational level. The purposes and methods of intercultural education are being set according to the developmental stages of young children, pupils and students. For example, the kindergarteners start interacting with children abroad through internet communications, such as e-mail and Skype. School pupils after K5 (eleven years old) are able to participate in study abroad programmes that vary in content, length and language requirements, as well as destination.⁴

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

Universities might be required to play a leading role when building a national and global network of different education sectors, industrial arenas and govern-

1. Super Global High School. (2018). *Outline of Super Global High School Program*. Retrieved from www.sghc.jp/en

2. Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO. (2018). *UNESCO ASPnet in Japan*. Retrieved from www.unesco-school.mext.go.jp/index.php?action=pages_view_main&page_id=500

3. Coelen, R. (2017). Internationalisation should start at school. *University World News*, 477. Retrieved from www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20171003140038411

4. Tamagawa Academy & University. (2018). *Education at Tamagawa*. Retrieved from www.tamagawa.jp/en



URBAN IMMERSIONS

An innovative collaboration between one South African and one Swiss university is creating opportunities for students to learn from each other while helping their respective communities. By getting students out of the classroom and into diverse cities through experiential and engaged teaching methods, this intermixing of Swiss and African students takes a novel approach to preparing for our global urban future.

Recognising that the challenges of the 21st century are both essentially global and essentially urban, the University of Basel in Switzerland created a new Master's degree programme in Critical Urbanisms in 2016. An integral part of this new two-year programme is a semester hosted by the African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, directed and taught by Sophie Oldfield – the first University of Cape Town–University of Basel Professor in Urban Studies – and Drs Anna Selmeczi and Laura Nkula-Wenz.

While University of Basel students take two courses at the University of Cape Town, they are given the chance to experience the complex urban realities of an African city first-hand and immerse themselves within the local academic culture. The semester-long programme of engaged and experiential urban scholarship opens up essential opportunities for students to get to grips with the everyday realities of African cities, to be immersed in the ethos and practices of engaged research, to try out different methods and to find a personal niche in the exciting field of urban research and practice.

CITY IMMERSIONS

Key to the semester in Cape Town is a set of 'city immersions' that allow students to work with communities and civil society organisations and experiment with embodied research methods. During the first part of the semester, students teamed up with People's Environmental Planning, a Cape Town-based non-governmental organisation that works

to solve stalled housing projects. During the city research project, teams of two – each comprised of one Basel student and one ACC student – recorded the personal histories of families whose recent move to permanent housing marked the culmination of a nearly twenty-year-long battle for housing security.

In addition to honing their interviewing skills and gaining confidence in their ability as scholars, students also experienced first-hand what it takes to do collaborative research at the community level. Being able to work alongside their peers from other African and Asian countries was critical. As one Basel student recalls: "The Southern Urbanism students understood the nuances of the culture, language and religion which was helpful, especially during the interviews."

A tangible outcome of the research project is the student-produced booklet *RUO EMOH – Our home, our story*, which chronicles the history of the housing project and richly illustrates individual journeys 'Ruo Emoh' families have made towards homeownership. Throughout this challenging project, both student groups appreciated the opportunity to interact directly with community members and to produce something tangible for them in return. This sharing, and its rigour, built mutual respect all around.

As one Ruo Emoh resident explains: "When the students came, they actually heard what people were saying. We saw this when the students brought our stories back to us and we read through them. When you can see that someone has listened and reflects your story in the way you told it to them – you feel

respected and appreciated. These narratives are a recognition of the work we have been doing.”

EXPLORING EVERYDAY URBAN SPACES

In the second part of their city immersions, students explore Cape Town’s diverse neighbourhoods, the ordinary spaces in which people’s daily lives take place. Here, they are able to choose between two options: *Sensing the City* or *Running the City*.

Sensing the City focused on art and public performance. This group experimented with knowing the city and its people as an aesthetic order – to learn about how urban spaces are made up of complex spatial patterns of sensory experience. For example, students were asked to visit a set of public spaces and take note of what they saw, smelled, heard and felt over the course of an hour. As one student enthusiastically noted: “I loved that the course happened outside of the regulated space and time frame of a normal class. Most of the meetings we really had outside, in public spaces or venues. Studying art, performance and effect in the city in this way was very productive and inspiring.”

Running the City explored mobility and movement by experiencing the city through running as a community sport. Each member of the group joined a Cape Town running club, participating in training runs on weeknights and in organised races in different parts of the city on weekends. Together, students produced various forms of field notes – texts, films, sound clips and artefacts – and forms of interviewing and conversations ‘on the move’. Students found running a good way to meet different people and get to know the city. As one reflected:



MA Critical Urbanisms students from the University of Cape Town and the University of Basel

“When you join a running club in Cape Town you are not only signing up to improve your running and your health, you are signing into a family who will make sure you reach your goals and enjoy every step along the way.” Learning through running proved to be a great way to see and feel the city on many different levels.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

This innovative mix of public and engaged learning aims to equip this generation of urban scholars and practitioners to think and work across diverse city contexts and through different forms of research practice. The programme intends to help students develop practical, as well as scholarly, forward-thinking approaches for steering cities towards more sustainable and equitable development.

This kind of urban learning is critical and urgent. More than half the world’s population resides in urban areas, a number set to increase to 66% by 2050. In Africa and Asia, this urban transition is significant because cities are home to the most precarious forms of urban

development, evident in slums, informal economic markets and fragmented cities. At the same time, most North Atlantic cities are scrambling to find new ways of dealing with the complex effects of ageing societies, new migration trends and industrial transitions, issues which shape cities in critical ways.

Successful internationalisation in the urban field requires new practices and methods of research and teaching, rooted in city worlds and in engagement with diverse and contested urban publics. Getting out of the classroom and into the city necessitates new partnerships between universities, civil society organisations, communities and fellow students from different hemispheres. There is little doubt that even the more established urban studies programmes will increasingly have to internationalise their courses to be able to meet the challenges of an urbanising world.

— LAURA NKULA-WENZ & SOPHIE OLDFIELD

TRANSNATIONAL DIALOGUES ON DISABILITY

In many areas of the globe, opportunities for disabled students to meet, study and advance thinking on disability and inclusion beyond the confines of national borders are nearly non-existent. Through the Dialogues on Disability programme at King's College London, however, internationalisation and disability services have entered into a symbiotic exchange of perspectives and best practices. ►



In 2013, the international branch of King's College London Summer Programmes, in collaboration with the university's disability service, planted the seeds of the Dialogues on Disability programme, one of the first of its kind globally. Designed for undergraduates, Dialogues on Disability began with disabled students from the University of Delhi visiting King's College London, with the aim of improving mobility for disabled Indian students, a group that then (and to a large degree still today) had *de facto* no access to international education.

The programme has become a powerful tool for creating continuous dialogue to improve the educational choices open to disabled students

Now well established, the programme has become a powerful tool for creating continuous dialogue to improve the educational choices open to disabled students. To date, the programme has brought together Delhi University in India, Humboldt University in Germany and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). These partner institutions take turns hosting and planning the annual agenda, each bringing their own perspective to the programme. Having attracted different institutional funders and, crucially, having gained champions in senior management in all institutions, this international journey towards greater understanding and engagement has brought with it some wonderful and entirely unexpected outcomes for all those involved.

CROSS-BORDER THINKING

For staff, especially amongst disability professionals with their typically national frames of reference, the most unexpected opportunity has been the experiential learning: the structured sessions to reflect on real-life situations, develop ideas and to discuss ways to turn those ideas into projects that would enhance engagement among disabled students. Part of this came from the opportunity for staff to participate in internationalisation themselves.

A week completely focused on cross-border thinking and contextualising

their own practices alongside those practices and legal frameworks of the partner institutions can be helpfully disruptive. Having the time to spend an extended period during a shared experience away from the usual busy London office environment enables staff to listen in more depth to the experiences of students with disabilities, which has both enhanced their understanding and influenced their approach to embedding inclusion at King's.

RIPPLE EFFECTS

Internationalised thinking has become deeply ingrained at King's Disability Support thanks to this experiential programme, and now the university is actively seeking ways to share its new ways of working. Recently, King's hosted the

Director of Learning Support at Ashoka University, a newly-established university in Delhi, India, to discuss how they might embed disability inclusion into service delivery from the outset.

Today, Dialogues on Disability continues to bring together globally diverse professional services and student union branches. The programme exposes them to the transformational experience that is internationalisation, all the while exploring profoundly important topics, from inclusion in all aspects of university life, to the facilitating role of mentoring, to identifying pathways to success after graduation. Back in London, the programme's lasting influence can be seen in how colleagues from King's College's Disability and Advisory Service, Careers & Employability, King's Sport and King's Student Union make plans to constantly improve the university experience for disabled staff and students.

For more signs of the continuing legacy of Dialogues on Disability, look no further than to this year's event at Humboldt University Berlin, which is being co-led by a previous programme participant. Having been inspired by their experience during the programme, they successfully put together a funding bid to enable them to convert their studies to part-time, so as to initiate a three-year project aiming to find concrete ways to enhance the disabled student experience.

INTERNATIONALISING DISABILITY SUPPORT

Subtly, effects also start to be seen in areas of the international higher education mainstream, such as student recruitment.



Photo courtesy of authors

Student participants in the Dialogues on Disability programme

A colleague working for King's student recruitment in India and Mexico recently recounted how a potential applicant approached him to overtly ask a question

programme from peers at their university who had participated in previous years and had felt empowered to declare a disability and enquire about support.

a speech in the presidential palace. In this way, the programme exhibits its value beyond its initial objectives. It is truly carrying international thinking into the depth of institutions whilst simultaneously improving the student experience, chances for student success and institutional practice.

— ALEXANDER HEINZ & LORRAINE
ISHMAEL-BYERS

Internationalised thinking has become deeply ingrained at King's Disability Support thanks to this experiential programme, and now the university is actively seeking ways to share its new ways of working

about disability support at King's. This was the first time an individual from either country had approached him so directly about disability support. The prospective student had heard about the Dialogues

The programme has received political acknowledgement at the very highest level: in 2014, programme participants were welcomed by the President of India, and one of the participating students delivered

CULTIVATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE AT EARTH

International education may be at its most unexpected – and its most effective – when offered to student populations who typically lack access to any form of higher education at all. As evidence, an agricultural university in Costa Rica's Caribbean countryside is recruiting young leaders from underprivileged communities across the developing world and quietly cultivating agents of social change.

Costa Rica has one of the best educational systems in Latin America and is among the happiest, safest, most tolerant and most sustainable countries in the world. The country is also home to an unexpected site of internationalisation and South-South cooperation at an agricultural school in the remote province of Limón.

EARTH University (*Escuela de Agricultura de la Región Tropical Húmeda*, or 'Agricultural School of the Humid Tropics'), is home to about 40 academics and 400 students who together represent more than 50 nationalities, predominantly from across Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. This tight-knit academic community has sustainability and student support foremost on the agenda.

CULTIVATING CHANGE AGENTS

Each year, EARTH professors travel to underprivileged and often remote areas in developing countries to interview potential students as part of a rigorous selection procedure for EARTH's four-year undergraduate Bachelor's programme in Agricultural Sciences. The process aims to evaluate prospective students' potential to make an impact in their home countries upon completion of their studies. Aspects such as entrepreneurialism, leadership potential and a feeling of social and environmental responsibility are important traits that are sought in the selection process and subsequently developed during the programme.

Despite English typically being taken for granted as the *lingua franca* of international education, EARTH's curriculum is taught entirely in Spanish. Students who come from countries where

Spanish is not the native language – 25% of EARTH's student body – take a four-month immersion course in Spanish to facilitate communication with their native Spanish-speaking peers.

Students generally come from vulnerable and marginalised populations, and 85% come from rural areas. More than 80% of students receive scholarships, with the rest receiving significant financial aid, empowering promising young leaders from economically underprivileged communities. About 85% of

EMPHASIS ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The attention to entrepreneurship in the light of intercultural collaboration is another important factor in the success of this programme. The focus in these students' home regions is on making human progress and reducing poverty. By combining sound insight into agricultural practices with a sharp business acumen, EARTH students are better able to recognise opportunities that are more likely to be embraced as innovative practices in their home countries.

More than 80% of students receive scholarships, with the rest receiving significant financial aid, empowering promising young leaders from economically underprivileged communities

these students – who would not normally have access to higher education, let alone international higher education – successfully graduate from the programme.

Importantly, 82% of students return to their home countries after graduation. This success is thought to be attributable to the rigorous selection process, the holistic educational model, the methodology of experiential and student-centred learning, the development of a sense of social and environmental responsibility, the generous scholarship programme and the continuous ongoing contact with graduates via the alumni programme. Students are selected for their motivation to be agents of change in their home communities, and at the end of the programme they feel empowered to do exactly that.

Entrepreneurship is thus integrated into coursework at EARTH, fostering international collaboration in team projects in which students work with their peers to develop a viable business enterprise. Students report that working cooperatively with peers from different cultural backgrounds as a cohesive unit provides them invaluable insights into the perspectives of team members from other countries. The experience sheds light on how their own views are informed by their cultures and past experiences. Students learn tolerance and appreciation for other perspectives, as well as how to collectively contribute to the success of the entrepreneurial project with shared governance. Students utilise the available diversity to benefit the task at hand. Important lessons are also learned in what can be challenging,

but ultimately rewarding, tasks that raise awareness about more universal goals such as providing equal opportunity regardless of gender or ethnicity.

INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS

Another strong feature of the programme, which contributes significantly to developing students' confidence and their ability to relate to and work together with people from other cultures, is that the EARTH curriculum includes a mandatory academic internship programme.

Students take a preparation course to facilitate and support their search, but the emphasis is placed on students' own responsibility to arrange internships in their area of interest. Many use this opportunity to go back to their home countries and (re-)establish professional relations, but even more students use the internship to go to a third country in search of knowledge and perspectives that are not available in their home countries. Such students often intend to return to their home countries after graduation with specific niche expertise that will allow them to contribute to the sustainable development of their own communities.

The strength of resolve of these students to succeed is remarkable. Considering that they are almost all from developing countries, it is quite striking that students succeed in finding internships all over the world (in over 65 countries), in most cases with their expenses paid for by the host organisation. In addition to working full-time, each student completes 65 hours of community service at their internship location, thus connecting their host organisations



EARTH University students

with the communities and strengthening the sense of social responsibility of the companies and the students.

The internship is a unique opportunity for experiential global learning and personal development, offering students an irreplaceable preparation for their professional future. This second layer of international mobility – students on internships and faculty members visiting them – constitutes not only further internationalisation of the academic programme, but also contributes to EARTH's global impact in the form of spreading ideas for the betterment of humankind.

SOUTH-SOUTH COLLABORATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This academic community is a great example of South-South collaboration. The contributions made to the home countries of the graduates is palpable, and as such, contributes to the primary mandate of EARTH University: to host young people to make them capable of leading positive change processes in their home communities, regions and countries.

There are many success stories among EARTH University's 2230 alumni, perhaps best summed up by the following recent alumni statistics:

- More than 80% of alumni live and work in their country of origin, about 90% of whom work in agriculture, environment and community development;
- 67% report that they have created jobs;
- 68% report that they have had a positive social impact, and 65% say their impact is environmentally sound;
- 55% are volunteers in their community.

Through the impact of its alumni – students from across the developing world, educated in Spanish in a quiet corner of Costa Rica – EARTH University is stimulating sustainable development in rural communities in the developing world.

The university continues to succeed in its mission of preparing leaders with ethical values to contribute to sustainable development and to construct a prosperous and just society.

— NICO EVERS, ROBERT COELEN
& BRET SHAW

EAIE BLOG SPOT

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

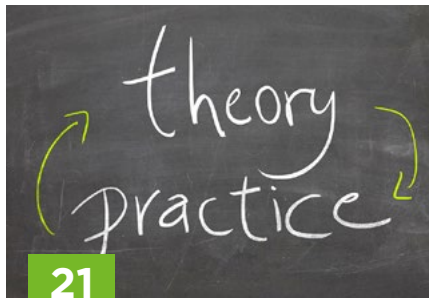


26
JUN

5 tips for running a successful student ambassador programme

When planning a new student ambassador programme, start with these five key tips gleaned from working with student content creators.

<http://ow.ly/bGwd30mKEFL>



21
AUG

Internationalisation at home in practice

What does 'internationalisation at home' really mean? A guide to ten key features of the approach and what they look like in practice.

<http://ow.ly/auyu30mKElr>



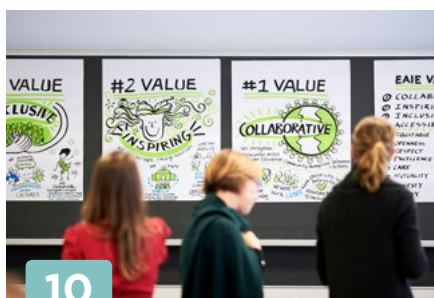
11
SEP

The EAIE launches major study on internationalisation in Europe

Introducing the largest and most geographically diverse dataset on internationalisation in Europe: the *EAIE Barometer (second edition)*.

<http://ow.ly/BZu730mKEN6>

EAIE GENEVA 2018

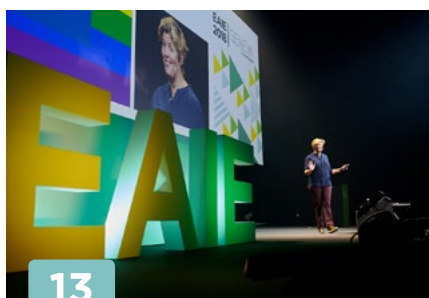


10
SEP

Living the EAIE values: a coming of age

Collaborative, inspiring, inclusive, excellence: these are the values that have always driven the EAIE, and now we've made them official.

<http://ow.ly/So9b30mKEST>

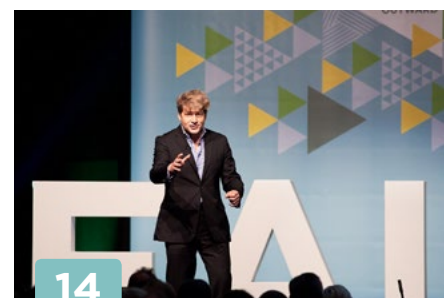


13
SEP

Facing today's challenges by facing outward

Sally Kohn discusses opposing hate, defending academic freedom and engaging with society at the EAIE Geneva 2018 Opening Plenary.

<http://ow.ly/Tift30mKEPO>



14
SEP

Future-proofing international education

The Closing Plenary of the 30th Annual EAIE Conference and Exhibition delivered an uplifting message about our global future and the role of education in reaching it.

<http://ow.ly/QNGw30mKEVX>

HELSINKI

A CITY OF SURPRISES

Helsinki, host of the 2019 Annual EAIE Conference and Exhibition, is an exceptional city that enchants visitors with its diverse urban culture and unfailing friendliness. From saunas to sprawling green spaces to new Nordic cuisine, the Finnish capital has plenty of distinctly Helsinkian surprises in store for every visitor. The conference will take place from 24-27 September 2019, but be sure to plan some extra time to explore all Helsinki has to offer.



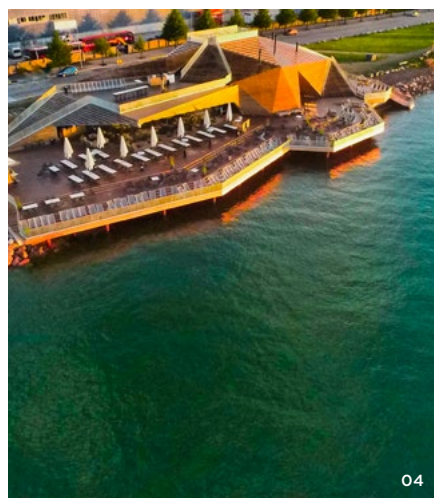


02



03

- 01. Löyly design sauna
- 02. Amos Rex
- 03. Aerial view of the Suomenlinna Sea Fortress
- 04. Löyly design sauna



04

OODI: A MASTERPIECE OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE

The new Helsinki Central Library **Oodi** opened its doors in Kansalaistori Square in December 2018, offering a free public space in the heart of the city. It hosts not only a library, but also studios, workshop spaces, a restaurant, a café and a cinema. Oodi is an events venue, a house of reading and a diverse urban experience. This modern library is a living and functional meeting place.

State-of-the-art libraries like Oodi are not only a key element in the inter-

nationally renowned Finnish education system but are also design attractions in their own right. Oodi showcases Finnish wooden construction expertise and sets an example for the libraries of the future.

AMOS REX: THE LATEST ADDITION TO HELSINKI'S CULTURAL QUARTER

The Finnish capital has gained a major new cultural institution and a striking new public space with the completion of **Amos Rex**. A meeting place for art and urban culture, Amos Rex consists of new underground exhibition spaces, the old

Lasipalatsi ('Glass Palace') building from 1936 and its Bio Rex cinema, as well as a vibrant events forum on Lasipalatsi Square, which serves as the roof of the exhibition hall. Pop into the Museum Shop and the Iittala store before or after your visit to the exhibition, or visit one of the many nearby cafés and restaurants.

URBAN NATURE

Helsinki is one of the greenest metropolises in the world: over one third of the city consists of parks and other green areas. There are also 42 nature reserves in the city, and many parks that can be enjoyed year-round: in wintertime they are used for skiing, and in summertime for jogging and picnics.

With over 100 km of shoreline and around 300 islands, you can sense the proximity of the sea everywhere in Helsinki. Take a sightseeing cruise in the archipelago, or visit one of the many islands open to the public.

One of the must-sees just off the coast of Helsinki is **Suomenlinna**, one of the biggest sea fortresses in the world and a UNESCO world heritage site. Suomenlinna is not only an important part of the history of Finland but also a lively district of Helsinki that offers something for everyone: nature, culture and history.

THE FAMOUS FINNISH SAUNA CULTURE

Hitting the sauna by the sea or lake is an essential part of the way of life in Finland. For centuries, the sauna has been a place for physical and spiritual cleansing, for getting bare in all senses of the word, and for entering the core of humanity. If you want to understand Finland and its people, going to the sauna is a good place to start.

The **Löyly design sauna** in Herneesaari is just a short distance from the city centre. The modern complex also houses a restaurant serving the finest Finnish cuisine, which visitors can enjoy



05. Illustration of the new Mall of Tripla in Pasila (district of Helsinki)

06. Restaurant Grön - window set-up

07. Restaurant Story



while admiring the stunning views from the large terrace that stretches out over the sea. This impressive building is a great example of contemporary wooden architecture. The Löyly sauna complex consists of three saunas: one smoke sauna and two wood-heated saunas. The terrace area includes a café and a restaurant open all year round.

The **Allas Sea Pool** spa complex is located right next to the Market Square, allowing visitors to enjoy swimming, saunas and a great seaside atmosphere. Take a dip in the sea pool and relax at the café, bar or restaurant while enjoying the city centre atmosphere!

Uusi Sauna opened in November 2018 and is the first new neighbourhood sauna built in Helsinki in the last 60 years. It offers an unforgettable sauna experience with communal vibes in the Jätkäsaari district. After the sauna, you can enjoy a lovely dinner in the cosy restaurant.

CITY OF DESIGN

Minimalistic, functional and clean, Finnish design has enjoyed an enviable international reputation for decades, and

Helsinki has always been its epicentre.

Design District Helsinki is a cluster of creative businesses that is full of fascinating design attractions and serves as a Mecca for fans of Finnish Design. It comprises 25 streets and 200 locations on the map, including design and antique shops, art galleries and museums, restaurants, hotels, design studios and more.

Tip: Discover the Design District on foot! The Helsinki Design Walk is a two-hour guided tour in English of the top design sights. Tours are organised on Saturday mornings at 11:00 throughout the year and last approximately 2.5 hours.

NEW NORDIC CUISINE

In just a short time, Helsinki has developed into a culinary capital. New Nordic cuisine has taken over the scene, and restaurants that have been established in recent years favour fresh, local and seasonal ingredients. When chefs themselves fall in love with simple ingredients, visitors to their restaurants also get to taste local flavours at their finest.

Ultima is a restaurant that aims to grow more than half of its ingredients on-

site in a hydroponic greenhouse. With a green, dreamlike ambiance, Ultima serves a full-evening fine dining menu, as well as snacks for a shorter stop.

If you're looking for fine dining, the concept behind **Grön** is to create tasty, focused, plant-based and inspiring food that concentrates on high-quality ingredients. The food is based on seasonal, organic and wild ingredients. The restaurant obtained a Michelin star in 2018.

Vegetarian food culture is also blooming in Helsinki. **Yes Yes Yes** is a stylish but laid back vegetarian restaurant and the menu offers lots of delicious choices that you can share among friends. **Omnam** serves vegetarian gourmet quality food, as well as convenient fast food. **Cargo Coffee + Vegetarian Food** serves breakfast, healthy lunch, coffees and treats.

Article and photos courtesy of Helsinki Marketing.

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