



**WE ARE
CREATED
TO CREATE**

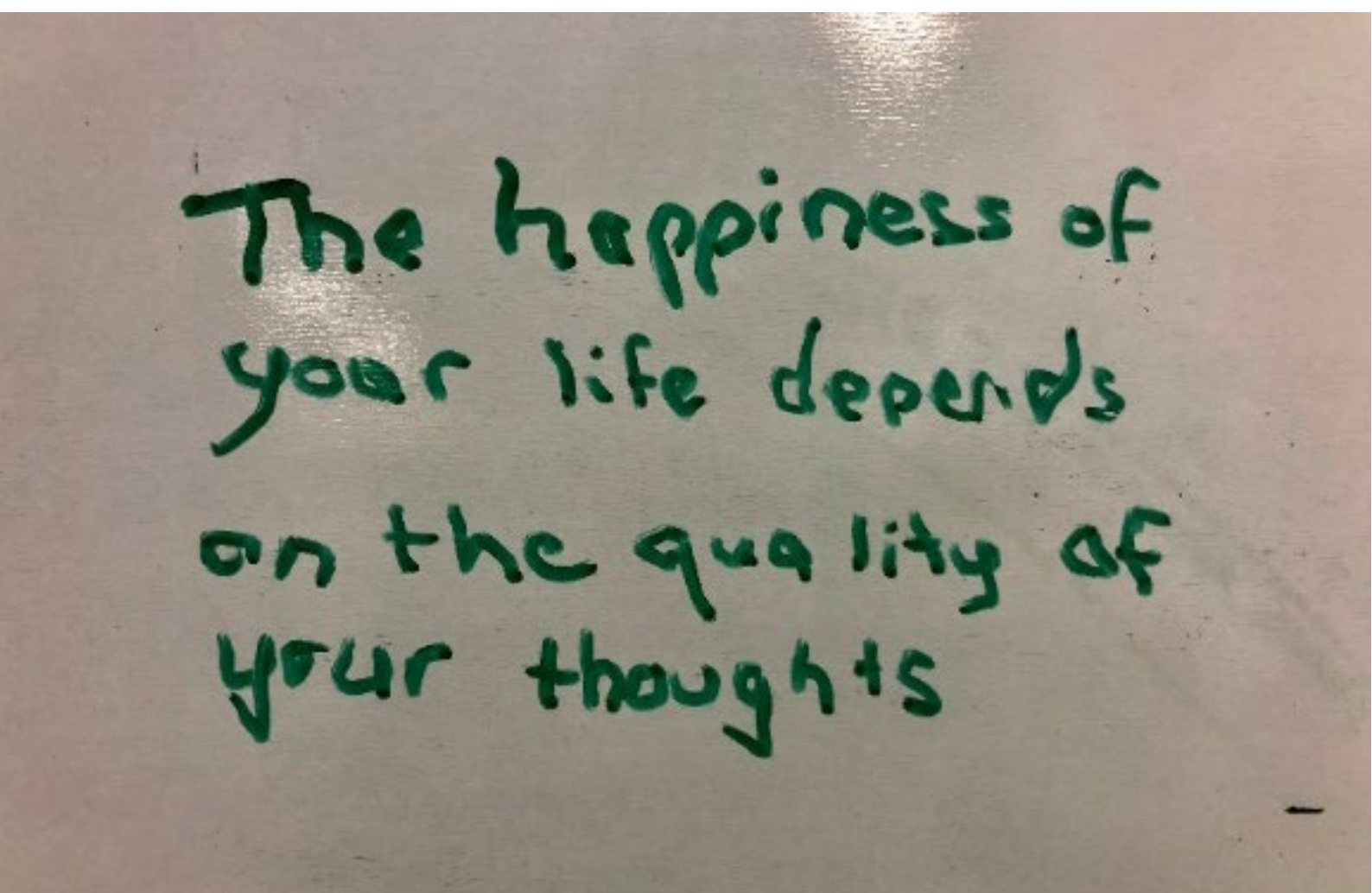
Focus on the Future

The Summit for Building Bridges and Thinking Ahead

Towards a Learner-Centered and Opportunity Driven Society

14 – 17 September 2026

Hotel Altes Kloster, Hainburg a.D., Austria



The happiness of
your life depends
on the quality of
your thoughts

Monday, 14 September 2026, Afternoon

CO-CREATING FUTURE (HIGHER) EDUCATION?

12:00 CET: REGISTRATION, MEET, GREET & CONNECT

12:00 CET: WALK & TALK – EXPLORING HAINBURG (optional)

Walk around the old town of Hainburg and visit of the site of the future European Campus

13:15 CET: WELCOME NOTE, OPENING & INTRODUCTION

The European Campus Hainburg – A Vision for Future Higher Education

Chris Schubert (EULIST Coordinator, TU Wien), Jiri Nantl & Franz Fidler (Co-Lead ECH, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

Empowering Civic Society and Entrepreneurial Experiments – Hainburg as a Symbol for Change

Leopold Kögler-Vencour (Section Head International Relations, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

13:45 CET: THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION? – PART I

Driving Skills & Innovation Ecosystems – (Future) Universities as Platforms for Collaborative Innovation in a Learner-Centered and Opportunity-Driven Society

Hannes Raffaseder (CEO & President, EURASHE / E³UDRES² / USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

Reimagining the role and impact of universities in the context of AI and other emerging technologies

Diana Andone (Director, Department of Digital Education and Distance Education, UPT – Politehnica University Timisoara)

The Future of Higher Education – Who is Setting the Scene, who is Making the Pace?

Alexandra Laschkolnig (Senior Expert Evaluation, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

15:00 CET: THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION? – PART II

Insights and Opportunities from the Austrian Higher Education Landscape

Anton Graschopf (Policy Advisor, FORWIT - Austrian Council for Sciences, Technology, and Innovation)

Insights and Opportunities from the European Universities Initiative

Melinda Macho (Head of Unit, Austrian Federal Ministry for Women, Science and Research)

Connecting Regions Through Talent – New Opportunities for European University Alliances

Dominik Fischer (Founder & CEO Fischer Strategy – Strategieberatung für Wissenschaft und Innovation)

16:30 CET: OPEN IDEAS-LAB I

Innovative learning and teaching of (future) skills and competencies in times of global challenges and rapid AI & EdTech developments

How can we promote the transformation of all-knowing professors into agile learning coaches who guide learners through flexible learning paths and ensure fruitful learning experiences? How are we enabling learners to unfold talents and who is supporting them? How can we ensure job-ready graduates who are – at the same time – prepared for a progressing career in uncertain times? What are the most promising teaching and learning methods to support (future) learners? How can challenge and project-based learning, experiential and engaged learning, learning in real-world scenarios... be mainstreamed? Talent is everywhere, but how can we reach the (so far) unreachable? Who is (afraid) of Dr. Google and Professor ChatGPT? How can learners and teachers benefit from AI and any other (educational) technology instead of being replaced? ...

17:45 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB I – SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

18:30 CET: DINNER – MEET, GREET & CONNECT @ Hotel Altes Kloster Hainburg (self-paid)

Tuesday, 15 September 2026, Morning

RE-IMAGINE INSPIRING CURRICULA & FUTURE UNIVERSITIES

09:00 CET: MORNING COFFEE – MEET, GREET & CONNECT

09:15 CET: KEYNOTE

Building Bridges Across Educational Ecosystems: How Communities Turn Innovation into Sustainable Change

Satu Aksovaara (Chief Specialist, Digitalization of Education, JAMK – Jyväskylä UAS)

09:45 CET: SMART IDEAS, CRITICAL REFLECTION & GOOD PRACTICES – PART I

The impact of joint degree programmes and European University Alliances from students' perspective

Sara Andone (Graduate, Una Europa European Universities Alliance, KU Leuven)

Dream or Nightmare? A Joint Study Course for Nine Universities at the Same Time

Gatis Krūmiņš (Leading researcher & Chairman of the Board, ViA – Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences),
Iveta Putnina (Development Vice Rector, ViA – Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences)

10:30 CET: SMART IDEAS, CRITICAL REFLECTION & GOOD PRACTICES – PART II

Rethinking Final Thesis Supervision and Assessment in the Age of AI

Thomas Leoni (Head of Faculty of Business, Wiener Neustadt University of Applied Sciences)

When Quality Assurance Looks Back Instead of Forward: Curriculum Development Between Evidence and Nostalgia - A Critical Reflection from Practice

Katalin Szondy (Head of Quality Management, FH Wien der WKW)

11:00 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB II

Inspire, Co-Create and Facilitate future-guiding Learning Environments, Experiences and Ecosystems to foster a Learner-Centered and Opportunity-Driven-Society in the Age of AI

While knowledge generation is accelerating rapidly, traditional university curricula typically change very slowly. Although the available information in some fields might double within only a few hours, many universities still evaluate their curricula every four to five years. While many universities still think in **closed bubbles of narrow disciplines**, faculties, departments, institutes and study programs and act along **linear processes from student recruitment to graduation**, from bachelor to master to PhD, both edtech-startups, big tech-companies and their AI-based platforms and social networks have **taken over the lead and provide the skills need for the world of work**. For many years now, people have been asking Google and (more recently) Chat-GPT instead of acknowledged professors from universities. People have got used to **learning on demand** in small bits and pieces, learn by doing, learn top-down to quickly achieve **hands-one results and problem-solving solutions** instead of bottom up from the fundamentals to more specific issues to applications. Universities have to **re-imagine their curricula** to ensure that they are truly more than their parts, offer **open learning environments and enhance learning experiences** and inspire, encourage and guide motivated talents. So, what makes a future-guiding curriculum? How can universities balance between sound specialist knowledge and broad interdisciplinary future skills, between individual specialization and holistic approaches, training of specialists to overcome skills-shortage and more general academic education as a basis for critical reflection, etc. How can universities boost flexible learning paths and recognition of prior learning? How can universities deal with different levels of prior expertise and experience? How can curricula tackle skills needed to strengthen European competitiveness? How can curricula bridge gaps between tackling specific skills shortage and providing more general (academic) knowledge? How can curricula integrate the world of work, research, innovation and community-based approaches?

12:15 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB II – SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

12:30 CET: LUNCH – MEET, GREET & CONNECT

Tuesday, 15 September 2026, Afternoon

UNLOCKING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF UNIVERSITIES-INDUSTRIES-COLLABORATION

14:00 CET: KEYNOTE

Briding Innovation Gaps – How to unfold the potential of universities-industries-collaboration

Arno Meerman (Founder & CEO, UIIN – Universitiy Industry Innovation Network)

14:30 CET: SMART IDEAS, CRITICAL REFLECTION & GOOD PRACTICES – Part I

Entrepreneurship, Higher Education and Innovation Ecosystems

Marian Holienka (Associate Professor at Department of Strategy and Entrepreneurship, Comenius University Bratislava & Member of the Expert Group, HEInnovate)

From Fundamental Research to Economic and Societal Value – Insights from MATE and E³UDRES²

Zoltan Kovacs (Vice-Rector for Science and International Affairs & Full Professor Department of Food Measurements and Process Control, MATE – Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences)

Impact Partnerships – The IT:U Approach for Collaborations with Industry and Society

Daniel Cracau (Director Outreach and Start-Ups, IT:U – Interdisciplinary Transformation University)

15:30 CET: SMART IDEAS, CRITICAL REFLECTION & GOOD PRACTICES – Part I

From Fragmentation to Growth – Insights and Opportunities from SMRT.BIO

Frank Mellis (Founder & CEO, smrt.bio)

TECH.LAND – Transforming Borders into Connections

Leon Cremonini (Liaison Research Strategy Europe, Research & Graduate School, Saxion UAS)

Fostering High-Tech and Future Business Models for Innovative Regions – Insights and Opportunities from Lower Austria

Sophie Egger (Technology Transfer Manager, tecnet equity),

Ursula Steiner (Head of Creative Pre-Incubator, accent - Inkubator GmbH)

16:30 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB III

HEInnovate – Fostering Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Future-Readiness in Higher Education

(www.heinnovate.eu), Facilitators: Flávia Colus & Luciana Grillo Ramos (Researcher, PPMI / HEInnovate)

We need to **reshape the role of higher education institutions** from providers of degrees and publications that are too often only read in the bubbles of narrow scientific communities into open platforms for collaborative innovation that empower **place-based skills- and innovation-ecosystems** and strengthen global connections. Such platforms encompass different generations of learners, teachers, innovators, researchers, entrepreneurs from different countries and cultures, engaging with industry and the wider public. Yet, academics often remain stuck in linear thinking and try to reduce complexity to solve existing problems, while **disruptive innovation quite often happens off the beaten scientific tracks**. To survive within global competition, we must deepen, expand and accelerate ongoing activities with **impact-focused and opportunity-driven approaches** rather than repeating long-lasting discussions about hurdles, barriers and lack of funding. But who is orchestrating and further developing (regional) innovation ecosystems and (trans-)national collaboration? How can we bridge existing gaps between academic bubbles and the world of work? How can we support and collaborate with startups and significantly raise the number of academic spin-offs?... HEInnovate is an initiative of the European Commission and the OECD.

17:45 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB III – SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

18:30 CET: SUMMIT DINNER @ HOTEL GOLDENER ANKER (free of charge for participants)

Wednesday, 16 September 2026, Morning

SMART TECHNOLOGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE REGIONS?

09:00 CET: MORNING COFFEE – MEET, GREET & CONNECT

09:15 CET: KEYNOTES

Towards Sustainable Business

René Schmidpeter (Professor & Studiengangsleiter für Nachhaltiges Management, Berner Fachhochschule)

From High-Performance Materials Research to Public Value: Engineering Sustainable Futures Together

Helmut Riedl-Tragenreif (Associate Professor for Surface Engineering, TU Wien)

10:00 CET: SMART IDEAS, CRITICAL REFLECTION & GOOD PRACTICES – Part I

AI-enabled Ecodesign for Sustainable and Engaged Regions – Contributions through Research, Education and Regional Orchestration to Sustainable, Economically Viable Cross-Border Regions: the Case of Digital Product Passports

Roman Wurz (Junior Researcher, Institute for Innovation Systems, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

AI-Supported Sustainability Reporting - Responsible AI, Governance and Trust in Corporate Disclosure

Viktoria Leitner (Sustainability Coordinator, USTP – St. Pölten UAS), Monika Kovarova-Simecek (Academic Director Digital Business Communications & Digital Management and Sustainability, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

10:45 CET: SMART IDEAS, CRITICAL REFLECTION & GOOD PRACTICES – Part II

Craft and Technology Education in a Rural Area: Insights from the “Technik für Kinder Vulkanland”

Daniela Wolf (Professor, Department of Information Technology, Ferdinand Porsche FernFH)

Engaged & Entrepreneurial Universities for Smart & Sustainable Regions?

Irene Auffret, (E³UDRES² Project Management, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

11:15 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB IV

Smart Technologies for Sustainable Regions? – How to co-create and implement innovative use cases?

Regions across Europe and beyond are confronted with **complex and interconnected challenges**: climate change, demographic shifts, skills and labour shortage, resource scarcity, unequal access to public services and many others. At the same time, **rapid technological advancements**, particularly in artificial intelligence and digital platforms, offer unprecedented opportunities to address these issues. However, many regions **struggle to translate technological potential into tangible, inclusive, and sustainable outcomes**. There is a strong need for **innovative, human-centered use cases** of AI and digital technologies to strengthen regional resilience and sustainability. To tackle citizens' needs, promising solutions must **ensure transparency, consider ethical aspects and provide benefits** for (regional) companies and communities instead of replacing people's jobs. Data availability, interoperability, governance, and public trust remain critical barriers that must be addressed. Proposed solutions may include smart mobility systems, data-driven energy management, digital healthcare services, or participatory platforms enabling citizen engagement. Interdisciplinary approaches, combining technological innovation with social, environmental, and economic perspectives. Of course, manifold questions arise in this context: How can AI be designed and implemented to benefit diverse regional populations? What governance models ensure responsible and equitable use of data? How can digital solutions enhance sustainability without increasing inequalities? What role can local stakeholders play in co-creating and scaling solutions? How can we foster collaborative, scalable, and ethical digital innovations to empower regions to become more sustainable, inclusive, and future-ready?

12:15 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB IV – SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

12:30 CET: LUNCH – MEET, GREET & CONNECT

Wednesday, 16 September 2026, Afternoon

STE(A)M ENGINES?

HUMANITIES, ARTS & CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN AN AI-DRIVEN SOCIETY

14:00 CET: KEYNOTES

From STEM to STEAM - Creative industries as drivers of economic innovation

Reanne Leuning (Director of Creative Industries, Advantage Austria)

How to Build a Truth Engine?

Friedrich Moser (Founder & CEO, Friedrich Moser Film GmbH & Friedrich Moser Tech Ventures GmbH)

Open Innovation in Science and Arts

Georg Russegger (Head of Center for Open Innovation in Science and Art, Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft)

15:30 CET: HOW TO BUILD A STE(A)M ENGINE - SMART IDEAS, CRITICAL REFLECTION & GOOD PRACTICE

Shaping a STE(A)M Engine – Insights from IC\M/T – Institute for Creative\Media/Technologies

Vanessa Leung (Head of IC\M/T, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

STE(A)M in Action – Visions for a future-oriented Bachelor's degree in Creative Media Production

Marcel Sagesser (Academic Director Creative Media Production, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

TAH – Center for Innovation in Technologies, Arts and Humanities – Learned Lessons and Next Steps

Jan Beseda (Director, Czech Association of Professional Higher Education)

16:30 CET: WORKSHOP

Design the Course That Would Have Taught You: A Live Validation Workshop for Transdisciplinary Technology–Arts–Humanities Teaching

Facilitator: Jan Beseda

17:30 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB V

Co-Creating a STE(A)M ENGINE to make Humanities, Arts and Creative Industries great Again!

At least within academia, there is increasing discussion about a (supposed) **decline in the humanities and arts**. Particularly against the backdrop of rapid technological developments, existing challenges to democratic structures, dwindling public trust in universities, and a lack of scientifically grounded expertise, a revival of the humanities is frequently called for. The **shift from STEM to STEAM** – that is, the integration of arts and humanities into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics – is an important trend that is being intensively discussed, at least within universities. Various **studies on future skills** also clearly point to the importance of critical thinking, discourse skills, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and so on – competencies that are particularly well-established and further developed in the humanities, arts, and creative industries. Europe seems **unable to keep pace with the US and China** in the area of technology-driven developments that accelerate efficiency, automation, and data-driven decision-making. However, the development of **human-centered use-cases for AI and other (future) technologies** that take questions of bias, authorship, ethics, cultural homogenization, fair access, inclusion and the erosion of critical thinking, the raise of fake news and challenged democratizes into account could offer an opportunity. In this context, the humanities, the arts, and the creative industries must play a key role in many respects.

19:00 CET: GET-TOGETHER – SCIENCE MEETS ART @ KULTURFABRIK HAINBURG

19:30 CET: HOW TO BUILD A TRUTH ENGINE - Documentary Feature | Austria, 2024 | 124min

written & directed by Friedrich Moser, executive produced by George Clooney and Grant Heslov

Film Screening, Introduction and subsequent discussion with director and screenwriter Friedrich Moser

17 September 2026, Morning

UNITED CAMPUSES OF EUROPE?

Unfolding the full potential of European Universities Alliances and co-creating a European Campus

09:00 CET: MORNING COFFEE – MEET, GREET & CONNECT

09:15 CET: KEYNOTES

The European Universities Initiative – State of Play and Ways Forward (online)

Stefan Zotti (Deputy Head of Unit Higher Education, DG-EAC, European Commission)

Monitoring European Universities – Insights and Opportunities for Further Development

Flávia Colus (Research Manager, PPMi / European Higher Education Ob

The European Universities Initiative – Challenges and Opportunities from the Perspective of Policy Making and Evaluation

Brigitte Ecker (CEO & Senior Researcher, WPZ Research)

10:30 CET: SMART IDEAS, CRITICAL REFLECTION & GOOD PRACTICES

Centering Relationships: European University Alliances as "Brave Spaces"

Janine Wulz, USTP / E³UDRES²

From Deep Cooperation to Deep Integration: What Makes a Fully-Fledged European University?

Reflections from CIVIS – A European Civic University

Eva Léchelle (CIVIS Institutional Coordinator, PLUS – Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg)

Linking Society and Technology – Insights from EULIST

Chris Schubert (EULIST Institutional Coordinator, TU Wien)

Co-Creating a Network of European Campuses as Powerhouses for Innovation

Jiri Nantl & Franz Fidler (Co-Lead ECH, USTP – St. Pölten UAS)

11:45 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB VI

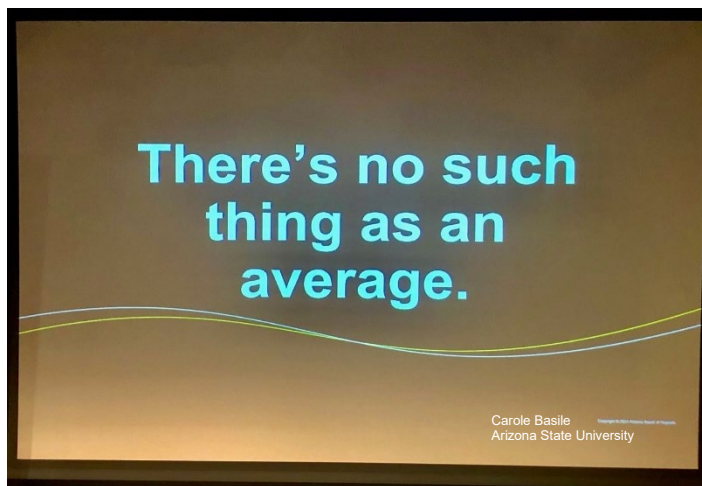
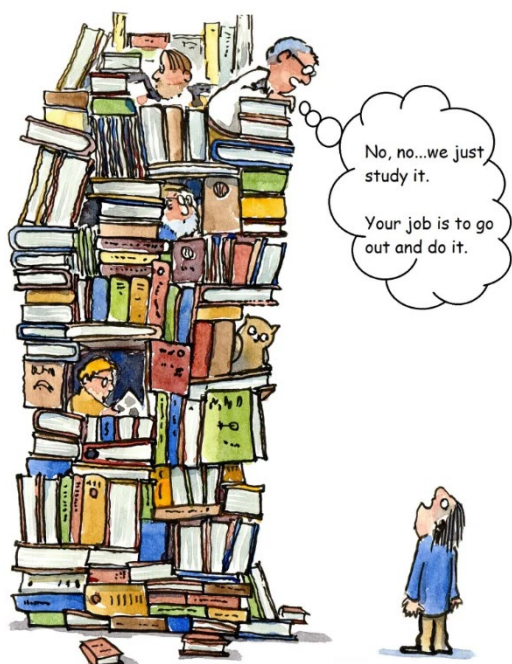
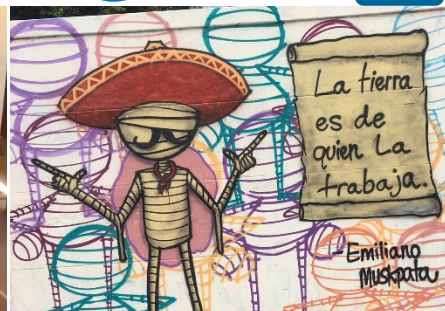
Unfolding the full potential of European Universities Alliances and co-creating a European Campus

The **European Universities Initiative** of the European Union is one of the most important higher education policy developments in recent years and is creating enormous **momentum in transnational cooperation**. The impact of the European University Alliances on the European Higher Education Area is multifaceted, even just a few years after the launch of this European flagship initiative. It is well documented by the European Commission and various European university and higher education associations, discussed at numerous conferences and high-level meetings, and the subject of various academic studies. European Universities Alliances have **co-created relevant success stories**, but how can the European University Alliances be best developed further? How can the numerous best practices that have been developed be fully realized within the European Higher Education Area? How can a long-term vision be pursued, and how can the alliances be viewed as a strategic development process rather than just another EU project? What opportunities arise from "United Campuses of Europe"? Which success factors are particularly important for the positive development of a "European Campus"? How can the European Campus Hainburg become a concrete demonstrator for learner-centered, opportunity-driven and cross-border European university development?

12:45 CET: OPEN IDEAS LAB VI – SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

13:00 CET: CLOSING REMARKS & FAREWELL

13:15 CET: LUNCH - MEET, GREET & CONNECT



"It's only a matter of time before your mind merges with AI"
(Ray Kurzweil)

“
Change in higher ed is slow to occur, when it does, and often only after years of handwringing, debate, and compromise that results in little change at all. University leadership is now about *intentionality* and *rapidity*, being purposeful and fast. Challenges are coming too fast and responses must match pace. No longer is it about finding the path with the greatest support or least resistance.

DAVID ROSOWSKY, PH.D.



Future Universities as Key-Enablers of a Learner-Centered and Opportunity-Driven Society: Ideas, Concepts, Best Practices

(created by M365 Copilot, updated on 24 August 2026)

As technological disruption, demographic change, geopolitical uncertainty, and the rise of artificial intelligence continue to reshape economies and societies, universities face a historic opportunity to redefine their role. The university of the future can no longer be understood primarily as a degree-awarding institution. Instead, it must evolve into a lifelong learning ecosystem that empowers individuals to continuously develop capabilities, seize emerging opportunities, and contribute to societal progress.

From Degree-Centric Education to Lifelong Learning Pathways

One of the most profound transformations in higher education is the shift from linear degree programs toward flexible, modular, and skills-oriented learning pathways. Learners increasingly seek education that is accessible, personalized, and directly connected to evolving labor market demands.

Micro-credentials, industry certificates, and stackable learning modules are becoming central elements of this new learning architecture. Recent international surveys indicate that more than half of higher education institutions already offer micro-credentials, while over 80% plan to grant academic credit for such credentials within the next five years. Furthermore, 97% of higher education leaders report that micro-credentials strengthen students' long-term career prospects. [\[assets.ctfassets.net\]](#), [\[aacsb.edu\]](#)

Leading universities such as Arizona State University, DeVry University, and numerous European institutions have embraced flexible learning models that enable learners to move seamlessly between formal degrees, professional certificates, and workplace-based learning. This flexibility supports not only young students but also mid-career professionals, career changers, and learners returning to education later in life.

The result is a university that accompanies individuals throughout their entire learning journey rather than serving as a one-time educational destination.

AI-Powered Personalization and Human-Centered Learning

Artificial intelligence is accelerating the transition toward personalized education. Adaptive learning systems, intelligent tutoring platforms, and AI-supported assessment tools can tailor learning experiences to individual needs, prior knowledge, learning pace, and career aspirations.

However, the future of higher education is not about replacing human educators with technology. Rather, AI should augment human learning by enabling faculty to focus more on mentoring, coaching, critical thinking, creativity, and ethical reflection. UNESCO emphasizes that the successful integration of AI in education requires a strong commitment to inclusion, transparency, human agency, and ethical governance. [\[unesco.org\]](#), [\[iesalc.unesco.org\]](#)

Institutions such as Minerva University have demonstrated how technology-enhanced active learning can foster deeper engagement, collaboration, and problem-solving capabilities. Future universities will combine the efficiency of intelligent systems with the uniquely human qualities that remain essential in an AI-driven world.

Interdisciplinary Learning for Complex Global Challenges

The most pressing challenges of the twenty-first century, from climate change and demographic transitions to cybersecurity and responsible AI, cannot be solved within traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Consequently, future universities are increasingly organized around problems rather than disciplines. Pioneering institutions such as Aalto University have demonstrated the power of integrating technology, design, entrepreneurship, and social sciences to foster innovation and create societal impact.

This interdisciplinary approach encourages learners to develop not only specialized expertise but also broader capabilities such as systems thinking, creativity, collaboration, cultural intelligence, and ethical decision-making. These competencies will become increasingly valuable as automation transforms technical skills and labor market requirements.

Universities as Opportunity Platforms and Social Anchors

Beyond education and research, universities are becoming critical opportunity platforms within their regions and communities. Their mission extends beyond knowledge transfer toward enabling social mobility, entrepreneurship, civic engagement, and sustainable development.

The most successful future universities will function as open innovation ecosystems that connect learners, researchers, employers, governments, startups, and civil society organizations. They will provide pathways for reskilling and upskilling, support inclusive participation, and actively contribute to regional economic resilience.

This expanded role aligns with UNESCO's vision of higher education as a key driver of lifelong learning and societal transformation. Universities are increasingly expected to act as catalysts for sustainable development, democratic participation, and social cohesion. [\[uil.unesco.org\]](http://uil.unesco.org), [\[uil.unesco.org\]](http://uil.unesco.org)

Evidence of Impact

Emerging research suggests that micro-credentials and flexible learning models can improve learner engagement, employability, and access to education. Systematic reviews highlight their potential to support rapid upskilling, lifelong learning, and more responsive connections between higher education and workforce needs. [\[link.springer.com\]](https://link.springer.com), [\[mdpi.com\]](https://mdpi.com)

At the same time, the evidence shows that successful implementation requires robust quality assurance, transparent recognition frameworks, employer validation, and strong integration into broader educational pathways. The challenge is therefore not merely technological but institutional and cultural.

Transnational Collaboration and Cross-Border Innovation Ecosystems

In an increasingly interconnected world, no university can successfully address complex global challenges in isolation. The future of higher education lies in transnational networks that enable the exchange of knowledge, talent, research capabilities, and innovation across borders.

European University Alliances, global research consortia, and international innovation hubs demonstrate how higher education institutions can jointly create educational opportunities that exceed the capabilities of individual organizations. By pooling expertise, infrastructure, and learning resources, universities can offer students more diverse learning experiences, international mobility pathways, joint degrees, and access to global networks throughout their careers.

At the same time, emerging technologies and rapidly changing skill demands require the development of cross-border skills ecosystems. Such ecosystems connect universities, industry partners, research organizations, startups, public authorities, and civil society across regions and countries. They facilitate the rapid identification of future skill needs, accelerate knowledge transfer, and support innovation-driven economic development.

For learners, participation in international ecosystems enhances not only employability but also intercultural competence, digital collaboration skills, and global citizenship. For societies, transnational cooperation strengthens resilience, competitiveness, and the capacity to address shared challenges such as climate transition, healthcare transformation, cybersecurity, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence.

The most successful future universities will therefore act not only as local anchors but also as globally connected nodes within international learning and innovation networks. Their ability to build trusted partnerships across borders will become a decisive factor in creating opportunities, fostering innovation, and enabling lifelong learning on a global scale.

Conclusion

The university of the future is agile, connected, inclusive, and opportunity-driven. It operates as a lifelong learning partner, provides flexible and personalized pathways for capability development, and empowers learners to navigate an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world.

By combining AI-enabled personalization, modular learning architectures, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a strong commitment to societal impact, universities can become key enablers of a learner-centered society. Their ultimate success will not be measured by the number of degrees awarded, but by their ability to expand human potential, create opportunities, and foster resilience across entire communities and generations.

ECH – EUROPEAN CAMPUS HAINBURG

The new European Campus Hainburg in Austria is co-created as a joint site of USTP – University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten and TUW – TU Wien together with European University Alliances E³UDRES² and EULIST and other stakeholders from the (cross-border) region and across Europe as an inspiring European Talent Hub strengthening the skills of entrepreneurial founders and leaders. The Campus is designed to become a joint site of two European University Alliances: E³UDRES² and EULIST. Located in Hainburg, close to the historic Roman city of Carnuntum, a gateway connecting different parts of Europe since ancient times, the European Campus Hainburg is also envisioned as a cross-border hub for connecting higher education, research and innovation in the heart of Europe.

www.europacampus-hainburg.eu

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

THE SUMMIT FOR BUILDING BRIDGES AND THINKING AHEAD

Our Higher Education Innovation Retreat in Hainburg offers an inspiring co-creation environment for informal exchange, personal conversations, good practice presentations, and discussions of creative ideas, inspiring impulses, groundbreaking concepts, scientific findings, provocative thoughts, ... In this cross-sector, cross-disciplinary, and cross-generational dialogue, young talents and impact-oriented "changemakers" meet with recognized experts from science and business, as well as leaders from administration and politics to exchange experiences, share knowledge, and jointly discuss creative ideas and develop forward-looking concepts.

The summit invites forward-thinking people passionate about education, research, innovation, and collaboration, working towards a prosperous, peaceful, autonomous, and democratic society. Meet like-minded colleagues for an inspiring retreat in a fascinating location to escape office routines, break out of established bubbles and leave the silos of disciplines, branches, hierarchies and generations to recharge ideas, foster collaboration, build (new) bridges and think ahead!

www.eudres.eu/focus-on-the-future-summit-2026

LOCATION

Hainburg is located in Lower Austria, on the river Danube, between Vienna and Bratislava, and in proximity of Vienna International Airport and the International Airport of Bratislava.

It is at the centre of a growing part of Lower Austria in the Austria-Slovakia cross-border area, also very close to the Czech Republic and Hungary. This unique geographic position makes Hainburg an ideal location for a European campus fostering cross-border collaboration and innovation.

www.hainburg-donau.gv.at

Hotel Altes Kloster (www.altes-kloster.com)

Fabriksplatz 1a, 2410 Hainburg an der Donau, Austria

hotel@alteskloster.at, 0043-2165 64020

Summit Dinner, 15 September 2026

Hotel Zum Goldener Anker (www.goldeneranker.at), Donaulände 27, 2410 Hainburg an der Donau

Science meets Arts, Film Screening "How to Build a Truth Engine", 16 September 2026

Kulturfabrik Hainburg (www.kufa-hainburg.at), Kulturplatz 1, 2410 Hainburg an der Donau

CONTACT

Concept and Program:

Hannes Raffaseder, hannes.raffaseder@ustp.at, 0043-676-847228-616

Organisation:

Brigitte Hagenauer, brigitte.hagenauer@ustp.at, 0043-676-847228-607