

International Week 2025: Partnerships for Skills

International Partnerships and Their Impact on the Development of Skills

Monday, 24 November 2025		
09:00–09:30	Registration & welcome coffee	Main Hall A
09:30–10:45	Official welcome & presentation of USTP – University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten & getting to know each other, part 1	Seminar Room A.1.08
10:45–11:00	Group photo	Main Hall B
11:00–12:00	Campus tour	
12:00–13:00	Lunch break	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
13:00–14:00	Networking / free time	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
14:00–16:30	World Café: Getting to know each other, part 2 & meet representatives of the departments & organisational units	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
14:00–14:15	Brief introduction of the International Week guests	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
14:00–14:45	Pitches of organisational units of USTP	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
14:45–15:30	Icebreaker activity	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
15:40–16:15	Meet & talk with representatives of the departments & organisational units	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
16:15–16:25	Wrap-up of the first day & preview of the second day	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
16:30–18:30	City tour St. Pölten	Meeting Point: Main Entrance Building B

9:30–12:00 | Seminar Room A.1.08

Official welcome & presentation of USTP & getting to know each other (part 1)

Hannes Raffaseder, Chief Executive Officer, USTP
 Daniela Lohner, Head of International Office, USTP
 Leopold Kögler-Vencour, Section Head of International Relations, USTP
 Further Representatives of USTP

14:00–16:30 | Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)

World Café: Getting to know each other (part 2) & meet representatives of the departments & organisational units

Facilitator: Daniela Lohner, Head of International Office, USTP

Mix & mingle with participants of the International Week and meet representatives of the six departments of USTP – University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten as well as representatives of the university's organisational units. Engage in networking, e.g., with other guests, representatives of the International Office, interdisciplinary Lab, European Project Semester, the European University Alliance 'E³UDRES²', Research & Knowledge Transfer, Higher Education Development and Quality Management, LEARN, etc. Get to know the six different departments of USTP:

Faculty of Health and Social Sciences:

- Department of Health Sciences
- Department of Social Sciences

Faculty of Engineering and Business:

- Department of Digital Business & Innovation
- Department of Media & Digital Technologies
- Department of Computer Science & Security
- Department of Rail Technology & Mobility

16:30–18:30 | Meeting Point: Main Entrance Building B
City tour St. Pölten

Facilitators: Claudia Grötzl, International Office, USTP

Join a guided walking tour and get to know the city of St. Pölten.

Tuesday, 25 November 2025		
09:00–12:00	Session 1: International Cooperations & Partnerships	Seminar Room A.1.08
12:00–13:00	Lunch break	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
13:00–14:00	Networking / free time	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
14:00–16:30	Gender & Diversity Award: pitches, keynote & award	Seminar Room A.1.11

09:00–12:00 | Seminar Room A.1.08

Session 1: International Cooperations & Partnerships

Facilitators: Leopold Kögler-Vencour, Section Head International Relations | Daniela Lohner, Head of International Office, USTP

After a brief overview of the International Week sessions, we will dive into the topic 'Partnerships for Skills' by placing the first session's focus on international cooperations and partnerships of universities. By presenting examples of USTP and in interactive group settings, we will discuss what kind of partnerships our institutions have and want, and how we get to the point of having fruitful cooperations that are of mutual benefit. We will use the 'Three Horizons Future Sighting Workshop' method.

In the session, we will address the following questions:

- What analytical and organisational skills are needed for evaluating cooperations and partnerships?
- What skills can students and staff learn at partner institutions that we evaluate?
- What do we define as strategic partnerships?

Part 1 | 9:00–10:00 – Evaluating Partnerships

All higher education institutions (HEIs) have international cooperations and partnerships and evaluate them on a regular basis. USTP has started to develop a new process of evaluating our partnerships in the fields of mobility for students and staff, in research and for projects, as well as network partnerships.

- University Partnerships for Mobilities: The Partner University Mobility Balance of USTP:**
Among other criteria, statistical data usually plays a major role in the evaluation process. Lena Fuchssteiner and Daniela Lohner from the International Office of USTP will show the 'partner university mobility balance' which is used as a tool for evaluating partnerships in the field student and staff mobilities. Leopold Kögler-Vencour will introduce the vision of how and where to extend partnerships in regions that are currently underrepresented in the USTP partnership map, such as all non-EU/EEA countries, and Africa and Asia in particular.
- University Partnerships for Mobilities: Open Group Discussion:**
The participants will discuss in groups where their main focus lies regarding university partnerships for mobilities.
- Criteria for Evaluating University Partnerships at USTP:**
The International Office of USTP will briefly introduce the criteria currently being worked out for partnerships for mobilities.
- Criteria for Evaluating University Partnerships: Open Group Discussion:**
Depending on the role and function of each participant of the International Week, different cooperations may be relevant and important to them. In an open table format, we will discuss which criteria play a major role when it comes to evaluating partnerships at the participants' home institutions from their individual point view. The feedback will be collected.

Part 2 | 10:10–11:15 – Shaping the Future of Skills and Partnerships
'Three Horizons Future Sighting Workshop':

Leopold Kögler-Vencour, Section Head of International Relations at USTP, will lead through the second part of Session 1. We will focus on the question which skills and partnerships we currently have, which ones we need in the future, and how we can get from one point to the other using the 'Three Horizons Future Sighting' method.

- Today: Which skills and partnerships do we need in 2025?
- Future: Which skills and partnerships do we need in 2035?

3. Transition: What do we need to do in order to achieve these goals by 2035?

How will skills and partnerships change? What challenges lie ahead? Which impact do these challenges have on future partnerships? Which challenges do we face today and in 2035?

Part 3 | 11:30–12:00 – Wrap-Up and Discussion:

Wrap-up and discussion of the results of the Three Horizons Future Sighting Workshop.

Contributor(s): Lena Fuchssteiner, International Office, USTP

all participants

Format: Presentations of examples, group discussions, interactive workshop

14:00–16:30 | Room: A.1.11

Gender & Diversity: Pitches, Keynote & Award

Facilitator: Anna Steinberger, Gender & Diversity, USTP

Pitches & Award:

Every year, USTP – University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten honours scientific theses with a reference to the topics of gender & diversity. Three candidates per category (bachelor, master, E³UDRES²), pre-selected by an expert jury, present their final theses in 2-to 3-minute pitches. On this basis, the expert jury will select the final winners who will be awarded prizes in the afternoon following a keynote speech. Find more information on the awards here: [Gender & Diversity Awards – USTP – University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten](#).

Keynote: 'What Academia Can (and Cannot) Do About Inequality'

Keynote speakers Lisa Tackie and Helena Segarra from the University of Vienna, Austria, will reflect on what it means to study, teach, and conduct research on racism and diversity within academic institutions that are often presented as progressive spaces of enlightenment, yet remain deeply shaped by structural exclusion and entrenched power hierarchies. Drawing on insights from the production of their MOOC '[Diversity in the context of university. Racism-critical perspectives into everyday university life](#)', they share their ideas, hopes, and challenges while engaging with the central question of how – and whether – academia can truly contribute to overcoming social inequalities.

Contributors pitches & award ceremony: Students

Contributors keynote: Lisa Tackie and Helena Segarra, University of Vienna, AT

Host of pitches & award ceremony: Edita Struplova, Junior Project Manager, USTP

Format: Pitches, keynote, award ceremony | hybrid

Wednesday, 26 November 2025		
09:00–12:00	Session 3: Skills & Internationalisation	Seminar Room A.1.08
12:00–13:00	Lunch break	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
13:00–14:00	Networking / free time	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
14:00–16:30	Session 4: Mobility for Skills, part 1	Seminar Room A.1.08
18:00–22:00	International Dinner including 5 Years of E ³ UDRES ² celebration	Main Hall B & Canteen

09:00–12:00 | Seminar Room A.1.08

Session 3: Skills & Internationalisation

Facilitators:

Marlene Cermak, Evaluation and Knowledge Transfer, Service and Competence Center for Higher Education Development and Quality Management, USTP

Lisa DAVID, Head of Service and Competence Centre for Teaching/Learning Development and Educational Offers (LEARN), USTP

Questions that will be addressed during this session include:

- Union of skills, future skills, skills for the labour market, societal skills, soft skills vs. hard skills: Which skills do we need?
- Which impact do internationalisation measures have on the skill sets of students and staff?
- How can international collaboration contribute to the acquisition/improvement of these skills in students & staff?

- International teaching, learning, and cooperation formats: Which level of complexity do we want for our partnerships? Which impact do they have on the skills of students & staff, our institutions, and eventually even our society?

Part 1: 9:00–9:30 | Introduction & Competence Models

The session will start with an introduction to the topic by the facilitators, Marlene Cermak and Lisa David from USTP.

Part 2: 9:30–10:30 | Lightning Talks

This will be followed by two Lightning Talks:

In the first Lightning Talk, Susanne Iris Bauer from the University of Applied Sciences Fulda, Germany, will contribute online with the topic: 'H³ – HyFlex, HighTech & HighTouch – Enabling academic success through flexible skills development and teaching/learning scenarios in blended learning studies of Social Work'.

In the second Lightning Talk, Christina Egger from the Service and Competence Center for Teaching/Learning Development and Educational Offers (LEARN) of USTP will speak about 'A Scientific Mindset for Citizenship: Empowering Students Beyond the Classroom'.

Part 3: 10:45–11:45 | Lightning Talks

After a short coffee break, the session will continue with two further Lightning Talks of best practice examples from contributors.

In the Lightning Talk 'Water Between Culture, Science and Technology: Heritage, Innovation and Awareness', Mihaela Violeta Pisleaga, Assistant Professor at the Timisoara Polytechnic University in Romania, will talk about developing a multidisciplinary course proposal, conceived as an innovative educational tool for the development of essential transversal skills in contemporary society. The central theme of the course – water – is approached as an integrative element at the intersection of culture, science, and technology, offering a complex framework for contextualised learning.

The proposed course, entitled 'Water Between Culture, Science and Technology: Heritage, Innovation and Awareness', aims to explore the multiple valences of water, from its symbolic dimension and cultural heritage to technological innovations and the challenges related to sustainability and ecological responsibility. Through an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach, the course aims to stimulate critical thinking, creativity, civic awareness, and sensitivity towards the environment.

In the last Lightning Talk, Christina Tanzer from USTP will introduce 'The iLab: a learning format to encourage, apply and reflect future skills'.

Part 4: 11:45–12:00 | Wrap-Up

The facilitators will wrap up the session with a 'message to take home'.

Contributor(s):	Susanne Iris Bauer, University of Applied Sciences Fulda, DE (online) Christina Egger, Service and Competence Center for Teaching/Learning Development and Educational Offers (LEARN), USTP Mihaela Violeta Pisleaga, Timisoara Polytechnic University, RO Christina Tanzer, Service and Competence Center for Teaching/Learning Development and Educational Offers (LEARN), USTP
Format:	Lightning Talk & interactive format partly hybrid

14:00–16:30 | Seminar Room A.1.08

Session 4: Mobility for Skills, part 1

Facilitators: Daniela Lohner, Head of International Office | Leopold Kögler-Vencour, Section Head International Relations, USTP

Mobilities of students and staff of universities can play an essential role for the development of various skills. This session will present several mobility programmes and highlight some experiences and examples from universities participating in the International Week.

Lightning Talk: 'Global Challenges – Local Strength. Skills for a Changing World: The Experience of Ukrainian University':

Oleksandr Spriahailo, Vice-Rector for Scientific, Innovation and International Activities and Svitlana Koval, Head of International Relations Office, from The Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy, UA, will give an insight from the perspective of a Ukrainian University in the form of a Lightning Talk.

Today, the educational landscape is no longer a stable environment but a field of constant transformation. Climate disasters, pandemics, terrorist threats, political repression, and the migration of millions of people form a new reality. Education must respond to these challenges, both technically and mentally.

This presentation will examine the development of flexibility, adaptability, and resilience among students, academic staff, universities, and national education systems in an increasingly complex and volatile world.

The presenters will highlight the importance of being ready to adapt quickly, at the level of the individual, the university, and society. Examples will be shared of unconventional solutions adopted by Ukrainian universities in high-risk conditions, including learning continuity, safety strategies, mental health support, and complex logistics, particularly in academic exchange programmes.

Contributors: Oleksandr Spriahailo & Svitlana Koval, Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy, UA
Format: Lightning Talks & interactive workshop

Panel Discussion: The Role of Networks

After a short break, the focus will be on the role of different networks in the context of mobilities and skill development of students and staff. Many universities participate in networks like, e.g., businet, Africa-UniNet, Eurasia-Pacific Uninet, EURASHE, EUA, European University Alliances, etc.

USTP will introduce a network that plays an essential role for mobilities of students and lecturers at our institution: The 'European Project Semester (EPS)' network. Niamh Jones and Natalie Doyle from the International Office of USTP will briefly introduce the network. After that, students, lecturers, and staff will discuss the benefits and challenges within such networks in a panel discussion.

Hosts for the panel discussion: Niamh Jones & Natalie Doyle, International Office, USTP
Contributors/panelists: Michael Iber, EPS Coordinator and Lecturer at USTP
EPS Students
Administrative staff from USTP's International Office
Format: Panel discussion

Workshop and Experiences of Participants: Mobility for Skills:

In the second part of the session, the focus will be on sharing experiences of the participants on the session topic from the perspective of non-EU countries: Participants from South Africa were asked to provide an insight into their country's mobility programme for teaching exchanges, which is called the 'Africa Initiative: International Teaching Weeks for Professional Development of University Teachers (AITW)'. The AITW project aims to foster internationalisation, enhance and promote professional development among university teachers and professional staff, and contribute positively to the quality of education.

Furthermore, a participant from Bosnia and Herzegovina will give an insight into student, teaching, and staff mobilities in her country.

In a group discussion, the participants will exchange further experiences, ideas, and take-aways.

Contributors: Zukiswa Zingela and Sarvesh Balkaran, Nelson Mandela University, ZA
Anneke Moolman, North-West University, ZA
Zajida Rahimic, University of Sarajevo, BA
Format: Lightning Talks & interactive workshop

Thursday, 27 November 2025		
10:30–12:00	Partner University Fair & networking	Mail Hall A
12:00–13:00	Lunch break	Large Assembly Hall (A.0.04)
13:00–15:00	Session 5: Mobility for Skills, part 2	Seminar Room A.1.08
15:00–15:30	Feedback & official farewell	Seminar Room A.1.08

10:30–12:00 | Main Hall A

Partner University Fair

Facilitator: International Office, USTP

The International Office of USTP – University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten organises the annual Go International! Day on 27 November 2025. Students and staff of USTP learn more about exchange possibilities. All participants from our partner institutions are warmly invited to present their institution at a booth at the Partner University Fair and get directly in touch with students and staff from St. Pölten.

13:00–15:00 | Seminar Room A.1.08

Session 5: Mobility for Skills, part 2

Facilitators: Leopold Kögler-Vencour, Section Head International Relations | Daniela Lohner, Head of International Office, USTP

In Session 5, we will continue discussing how mobility can contribute to developing skills in students and staff. First, we will hear a Lightning Talk from an Arab University, afterwards we will focus on short-term mobilities and their impact on the development of skills.

Lightning Talk: 'Mobility for Skills from the Perspective of an Arab University':

Majid Alkahali, Head of Student Affairs at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman, will give a presentation about the services and activities provided to students at his university. He will talk about the importance of mental health for students and the importance of providing psychological support for students to be more successful in their academic life. He will focus on the perspectives and needs of Arab students who plan to study in Europe.

Furthermore, Majid Alkahali will present his experiences with the services they provide at their institution to students and employees in general. Additionally, he will provide a brief insight into community service and inform about an American international accreditation his university obtained in providing these services.

Contributor: Majid Alkahali, Sultan Qaboos University, OM

Format: Lightning Talk

Short-Term Mobilities and Skills:

In the second part of 'Mobility for Skills', the focus will be on cooperations for short-term mobilities.

Representatives from the E³UDRES² European University Alliance will introduce some of their 'products', including good practice examples from the past. They will introduce the 'Talent Funnel' which was developed within the alliance. Moreover, they will explain which skills students and staff are developing by attending short-term formats of E³UDRES².

In the following panel discussion, the focus will be on entrepreneurial skills. Leopold Kögler-Vencour will host this discussion with a E³UDRES² Ent-r-e-novator (EE) and students (requested) who participated in short-term mobility formats. Additionally, the role of Erasmus+ short-term mobilities (Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs)) in this context will be addressed by an International Mobility Coordinator at USTP.

Contributors: Klaas Vansteenhuyse, Director for Learning @ E³UDRES², BE

Host of panel: Leopold Kögler-Vencour, USTP

Panel discussion: Students (requested)
Janja Dörsch, Ent-r-e-novator (EE) at USTP (requested)
Daniela Lohner, USTP

Format: Presentation, panel discussion

Exchange of Experiences with Short-Term Mobility Formats:

In the last part of this session, the International Week's participants will discuss their experiences with short-term mobility formats (e.g., summer schools, BIPs, etc.). Which skills do students and staff learn within such formats? What was successful, what was not?

Contributors: All participants

Format: Group discussions

15:00–15:30 | Seminar Room A.1.08

Feedback & Official Farewell

Daniela Lohner, Head of International Office, USTP

Leopold Kögler-Vencour, Section Head of International Relations, USTP

Further representatives of the USTP