

**GLOBAL FORUM ON HIGHER EDUCATION 2025:
RENEWAL OF THE DEMOCRATIC AND CIVIC MISSION**

Prague, 3-4 June 2025

Charles University

SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES

JONATHAN ALGER

Jonathan Alger is President of American University in Washington, DC, where he founded the new Civic Life initiative for civic learning to support democracy. He previously served as President of James Madison University and also held positions at Rutgers University, the University of Michigan, American Association of University Professors, U.S. Department of Education, and a major international law firm. He is the current board chair of the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) and co-chair of the Association of Governing Boards' Council of Presidents, and has previously chaired the boards of Campus Compact and the National Association of College and University Attorneys. Alger has spoken and written extensively about higher education law and policy, diversity, academic freedom, and civic engagement among many other topics. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and Council on Competitiveness, and a graduate of Swarthmore College and Harvard Law School.



NANA ABA APPIAH AMFO

Nana Aba Appiah Amfo is the first female Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana. She is a Professor of Linguistics, an experienced administrator, with over two decades experience working in the higher education sector. As Vice-Chancellor, she is leading the University to adopt technology in all its operations, while keeping the University's people as the focus. She has received numerous awards for her work in education, female empowerment and leadership. She is a member of many prestigious societies and organizations. Among others, she is a fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD), Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Commonwealth Professionals Fellowship and the International Women's Fellowship Leadership Foundation. She is the President of the African Humanities Association and the International Federation of Modern Languages and Literature (FILLM). She is Vice-Chair of the African Research Universities Alliance and an Administrative Board member of the International Association of Universities.



PETER ARONSSON

Peter Aronsson has been vice-chancellor of Linnaeus University since 1 October 2017. He is a professor of history and has previously served as pro vice-chancellor, deputy vice-chancellor, dean, and vice dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, and vice chair of the Committee for Societal Driving Force. His research includes local and regional history, the dynamics of democratic political culture, history education, use of history, and cultural heritage. He examines the role of local communities and regions in the development of civil society and nation-states, and the impact of history presented by schools, museums, politicians, media, businesses, and individuals on public awareness.



MIKULÁŠ BEK

Mikuláš Bek was born in Šternberk to parents from Litovel and Olomouc. He grew up in Prague, where his parents moved. After graduating from a grammar school in 1982, he came to Brno for the first time as a student of Musicology at the then University of Jan Evangelista Purkyně, which is Masaryk University today. In 1986 he completed his studies and, after completing military service, he continued at Charles University in Prague, where he obtained a doctorate. During his studies he completed a half-year study visit to the Humboldt University in Berlin. At the Faculty of Arts at Charles University, he then worked as an assistant professor; in 1994 he was a “visiting lecturer” at Royal Holloway College (University of London). Since 1999 he has been teaching at Masaryk University in Brno, where he initially worked as the head of Department of Musicology, and since 2004 as vice-rector for strategy and external relations, among other things responsible for international relations and European Structural Fund projects. From 2011 to 2019 he served for two terms as the rector of Masaryk University. He also held the position of vice-president of the Czech Rectors Conference for education and represented the Czech Republic in the council of the European University Association. From 2000 to 2017 he lived in Dambořice, where he was a representative for a single term (2006–2010). In 2018 he was elected senator for the constituency of Brno-město and became Vice-Chairman of the Senate Committee on European Union Affairs; in 2020 he was elected its chairman.



HEATHER CAMPBELL

Heather Campbell is Professor and Director of the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia, Canada. Until 2018 she was Professor of Town and Regional Planning at the University of Sheffield, UK, where she held various roles including, Head of Department and supporting the Vice-Chancellor and Chair of Council on strategic matters related University/Community partnerships. She is Senior Editor of Planning Theory and Practice. She is a Fellow of the



Academy of Social Sciences and a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. Her current research is concerned with how university research and teaching need to change to better support transformative policy agendas. This builds on previous work at the interface of planning theory and practice concerned with public policy intervention, and the realisation of, more just and equitable, outcomes. She has a particular interest in the nature of practical judgement.

PATRICK DEANE (KEYNOTE)

Patrick Deane became the 21st Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University on July 1, 2019. Dr. Deane is the former President and Vice-Chancellor of McMaster University, a position he held for nine years. Prior to that he served as Vice-Principal (Academic) at Queen's and also held a number of academic administrative appointments at Western University and the University of Winnipeg. Dr. Deane is a Professor of English Literature, with his principal research focus being the relationship between cultural production and British politics in the first half of the Twentieth Century. He read English and Law at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, before undertaking graduate studies and receiving both an M.A. and a Ph.D. in English Literature from Western University. He also taught at Western from 1988 to 2001 following some years on faculty at the University of Toronto. Dr. Deane was the first recipient of the John Charles Polanyi Prize for Literature in 1988, and was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012. He was made an Honorary Life Member of the Alma Mater Society of Queen's University in 2010. In fall 2023, he received an honorary degree from McMaster. He is President of the Governing Council of the Magna Charta Observatory, Vice-President and Treasurer of the International Association of Universities, Chair of the Matariki Network of Universities, served as Chair of the Universities Canada Standing Committee on Research, 2019-2023, and a member of the Campaign Cabinet for the United Way of Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington and the Loran Scholars Board.



TIMOTHY EATMAN

Timothy K. Eatman, Ph.D., an educational sociologist and publicly engaged scholar, serves as Inaugural Dean of the Honors Living - Learning Community and Professor of Urban Education at Rutgers University-Newark. Before this appointment, he served as Faculty Co-Director of Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life and Associate Professor of Higher Education at Syracuse University. Tim serves on multiple boards and commissions including as past chair of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and Chair of the Membership Committee; Co-chair of the Urban Research Based Action Network (URBAN); member of the National Advisory Committee for the Carnegie Engagement Classification for Community Engagement;



member of the National Advisory Board for Bringing Theory to Practice; member at large of AASCU's American Democracy Project Steering Committee; and past board chair of the International Association for Service Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE). He has written several book chapters and reports including the widely cited *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University*. Tim is co-editor of *The Cambridge Handbook of Service Learning and Community Engagement*.

VERITY FIRTH

Professor Verity Firth AM is the Vice-President Societal Impact, Equity and Engagement at the University of New South Wales. Prof. Firth has over twenty years' experience at the very highest levels of government and education sectors in Australia. Prior to her role at UNSW, Prof. Firth was the Pro Vice-Chancellor Social Justice and Inclusion at UTS (2015-2022), the CEO of the Public Education Foundation (2011-2014) and the NSW Minister for Education and Training (2008-2011). Verity is a member of the Commonwealth Government's Implementation Advisory Committee for the Australian Universities Accord, a comprehensive reform initiative aimed at transforming Australia's higher education system.



TONY GALLAGHER

Tony Gallagher is a Professor Emeritus and Honorary Professor of Education at Queen's University, and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Science. Prior to his retirement from Queen's he held a number of leadership roles in the University, including Head of School, Dean of Research for Arts, Humanities and Sciences, and Pro Vice Chancellor. His primary research interests lie in the role of education in divided societies and the civic and democratic role of higher education. He has researched collaborative school networks and shared education in Northern Ireland and other divided societies, and is a member of the Steering Group of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy. He has also contributed to working groups of the Council of Europe over the past 20 years and is currently a member of the Sub Group on Higher Education.



MATJAZ GRUDEN

Matjaž Gruden is Director for Democracy at the Council of Europe, which includes Council of Europe activities and programmes in the area of education, including education for democratic citizenship, youth cooperation, civil society, media freedom, culture and cultural heritage. Matjaž Gruden previously served as Director of Policy Planning, Deputy Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General, political adviser and speechwriter for the Secretary General and President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Prior to his career at the Council of Europe, he was a diplomat at the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, posted in Brussels. He holds a law degree from the Law Faculty of the University of Ljubljana, as well as a postgraduate degree in EU law from the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium.



ANN GRVITISHVILI

Ann Gvritishvili is a Steering Committee member of Global Student Forum. Before she was an Executive Committee member of the European Students' Union for two years. She has a wide range of experience working with state, non-governmental and private institutions, in Georgia and Europe. Ana has over six years of experience in the Higher Education field. She is a PhD student at the Education Science programme at International Black Sea University. Ann became a member of ESU's Student Experts' Pool in 2020. She has prior experience in internal/external quality assurance, expert pool management, recognition and the field of higher education. She actively participates in national and international institutional and programme reviews. She has experience organizing and participating in various events internationally.



IRA HARKAVY

Ira Harkavy is the founder and Barbara and Edward Netter Director of the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania. Harkavy is Chair of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy and Founding Chair of the Anchor Institutions Task Force. His research and teaching focus on the history and practice of urban university-community-school partnerships and the democratic and civic missions of higher education. As Netter Director since 1992, Harkavy has helped to develop academically based community service courses as well as participatory action research projects with Penn's local community of West Philadelphia. He has co-authored and co-edited fourteen books, including *Dewey's Dream: Universities and Democracies in an Age of Education Reform* (2007); *Knowledge for Social Change: Bacon, Dewey, and the Revolutionary Transformation of Research Universities in the Twenty-First Century* (2017); and *Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability, and Social Justice* (2023).



JACINTH HENRY-MARTIN

Ambassador Jacinth Lorna Henry-Martin is a seasoned diplomat, public servant, and cultural advocate from Saint Kitts and Nevis. With a career spanning over two decades, she has served at the highest levels of international diplomacy and governance. In 2023, she returned to the service of her country as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States and Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States (OAS), a role she previously held from 2011 to 2015 as the first female appointed by the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis in this capacity. Her diplomatic work has included non-resident ambassadorships to Mexico and Paraguay, chairing the OAS Permanent Council, and senior roles within the OAS General Secretariat. Ambassador Henry-Martin's public service includes her tenure as elected Federal Minister of Information, Culture, Youth, and Sport (2000), and earlier as Director of Culture. Internationally, she served as Deputy High Commissioner to the United Kingdom (2005–2008) and as Director for the Saint Kitts Tourism Authority Office in the U.S.A. Academically accomplished, she holds a Masters in Technical and Specialized Translation, with multilingual fluency in English, Spanish, French, and working knowledge of Portuguese. An artist at heart, she is also a published poet and spoken word performer, known for weaving culture into her advocacy and youth mentorship.



KAI HOPKINSON-RAMSAMMY

Kai Hopkinson-Ramsammy, a senior at the University of San Diego (USD), is a dedicated and passionate student leader with diverse involvement across various campus organizations and initiatives. As the co-president of the Black Student Union (BSU), Kai plans and coordinates different events throughout the academic year, aiming to enhance the experience of Black students on campus. Additionally, she works with Black faculty and staff to establish mentorship opportunities for BSU students. Kai is also a Student Director at the Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness, and Social Action, where she helps coordinate a tutoring program for local San Diego K-12 schools. She is also actively involved with the Black InGenius Initiative where she supports local San Diego high school students as they begin planning and preparing for college. Kai's engagement expands across the USD community, including the USD International Torero Ambassadors, USD College Corps, National Society of Black Engineers, Student Support Services, Jacobs Institute for Innovation in Education, and the University Ministry's Tijuana-Day Trip Program.



ANTONÍN JANČAŘÍK

Dean of the Faculty of Education, Charles University Antonín Jančařík is a respected researcher and Research Associate Professor in the field of mathematics education at the Faculty of Education, Charles University. With a rich academic background, including a Ph.D. in Algebra from the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics at Charles University, Doc. Jančařík is deeply engaged in enhancing educational methodologies through the use of ICT and exploring students' attitudes towards learning. Currently serving as the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Doc. Jančařík is leading various groundbreaking projects, such as the Cooperation project focused on subject-specific education research and the AI assistant for students and teachers. His vast experience also spans international collaborations, having contributed to prominent EU-funded research initiatives in mathematics education and online learning. Doc. Jančařík is dedicated to shaping the future of education, both in the Czech Republic and abroad, and his work continues to have a profound impact on educational practices.



GERGELY KOVÁTS

Gergely Kováts, PhD is an associate professor at the Institute of Strategy and Management at Corvinus University of Budapest, where he also serves as the executive director of the Center for International Higher Education Studies. He earned his master's degree at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration (Hungary) in 2002 and the Institute of Education, University of London (UK) in 2005. He holds a PhD from Corvinus University of Budapest (2013). Dr. Kováts worked in university administration from 2006 to 2020, focusing on quality development. During this time, he contributed to conducting satisfaction and student evaluation surveys, managing accreditation processes, developing management information systems and institutional strategies. He continues to participate in accreditation site visits organized by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee and international accreditation agencies. As a researcher, Dr. Kováts specializes in higher education management and governance, institutional autonomy, and academic freedom. His teaching portfolio spans organizational theory, public management, and higher education studies.



MILENA KRÁLÍČKOVÁ

Milena Králíčková is the rector of Charles University. She graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Pilsen at Charles University in Prague in 1996, after which she worked at the Department of Histology and Embryology and at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the University hospital and Faculty of Medicine in Pilsen. In 1997 she was awarded by The Fulbright Commission Scholarship for the academic year 1998/1999 and she has worked at The Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard in Boston, U.S.A. in the team of Reproductive Endocrine Unit. In 2016, Mrs.



Králíčková became a professor of medical histology and embryology. She was the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Pilsen between 2010 and 2014 and the Vice Rector for Education of Charles University between 2014 and 2022. She is the rector of Charles University since February 1st, 2022. Since August 2023 she is also the President of the Czech Rectors' Conference.

PETER MAASSEN

Peter Maassen is professor at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Oslo (UiO), Norway, and extraordinary professor at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. His main research interests are higher education and science governance and policy, academic freedom, and global science collaboration. He has extensive experience in national and international expert committees and evaluation panels and has had various leadership positions in higher education. He is currently member of the executive board of the Barratt Due Music Academy, Oslo, the academic coordinator of the studies undertaken for the European Parliament Academic Freedom Monitor, and member of the Working Group established by the Council of Europe for implementing the 4-year project "Democratic mission of higher education" (2024-2027). He has produced over 250 international publications.



PAOLA MATTEI

Paola Mattei is Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at the Department of Social and Political Sciences, University of Milan, Italy. She is the Director of the Evidence-Based Policy and Research Action Hub (EPRAHub) at the University of Milan (www.eprahub.eu). She is Executive Editor of the European Journal of Educational Research. She is a Member of the Working Group on Academic Freedom at the Council of Europe. Her research has two main streams: a) organisational and management reforms in public services, public accountability mechanisms, and citizens' engagement policies; b) globalization and education policies. Underlying her research is the problematic relationship between accountability, democracy, and public services' reforms associated with managerialism and privatisation of education policy-making. She has recently published a monograph on Democratising Science (Bristol University Press, 2023), and the Oxford Handbook of Education and Globalization (Oxford University Press, 2024).



JACK MAYERHOFER

Jack Mayerhofer is the Senior Program Officer for Global Coalitions working on the Advocacy team at Scholars at Risk. In this role, Jack coordinates with regional coalitions of academics and human rights practitioners for advancing the protection and promotion of academic freedom around the world including in Africa, the Americas, and Southeast Asia. Prior to joining SAR, Jack was Deputy Executive Director at the Auschwitz Institute for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities where he worked with government and civil society partners to strengthen human rights policymaking, particularly in Africa, Europe, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. Jack earned a Masters of Science in Global Affairs from Rutgers University and a Bachelors of Science in French and Applied Linguistics from Penn State University. Jack's research interests include the analysis of anti-democratic efforts, such as attacks on academic freedom, and their relationship to the risk of political violence.



SYNDIA NAZARIO-CARDONA

Syndia A. Nazario-Cardona is the Associate Vice President of Government Affairs and Institutional Relations for Universidad Ana G. Méndez and Ana G. Méndez University. With over 30 years of experience, she is a dedicated advocate for educational access, social justice, and civic engagement. Her work has focused on expanding opportunities for youth, adult learners, and immigrant communities, particularly within underserved Hispanic populations in the U.S. and beyond. Throughout her leadership at Ana G. Méndez, she has played a key role in advancing institutional strategies that promote higher education as a tool for empowerment and community development. Her efforts have helped shape policies and programs that support educational equity at local, national, and international levels. She has presented her work across Latin America, Europe, Africa, and the U.S., and in 2022 was recognized as one of the 100 Successful Women in Business in London for her impact as an agent of change.



MARIE-ANNE PERSOONS

Dr. Marie-Anne Persoons is Advisor International Policy at the Department of Education and Training of the Flemish Community of Belgium. She graduated in Oriental Languages and History (section of Indo-Iranian studies) from the Catholic University of Leuven in 1984. She continued studying Chinese language at the National Taiwan Normal University. Further studies in Leuven include a postgraduate degree in Philosophy (1988) and a Ph.D. in Oriental studies (1995). She obtained a Master degree in Public Management from the University of Antwerp (2008). Apart from sworn interpretation from/to Chinese at the Court of Antwerp, her first professional experience was connected to teaching and research at the University of Leuven, the Antwerp Royal Academy of Fine



Arts, and the Antwerp Institute of Art History. In 1996 she joined the Flemish Department of Education and Training and has been working in international education policy ever since, initially mostly in relation to the EU Education Committee and the Bologna Follow-up Group, chairing both bodies in 2001. She was general coordinator of the Benelux Bologna Secretariat (2007-09) before joining the European Commission as national expert (2009-11). Since 2012 she has co-ordinated her Department's multilateral and bilateral dossiers and participated in several UNESCO, OECD, COE and BENELUX policy forums, such as the UN's SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee (2016-21) and as Chair of the OECD's Education Policy Committee (2018-21). Since 2024 she serves as chair of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Education.

YADIRA PINILLA

Yadira Pinilla is a senior specialist in the Department for Human Development, Education and Employment at the Organization of American States (OAS). She was a former advisor to the Director for Sustainable Democracy and Special Missions of the OAS and has over 25 years of experience in international affairs and multilateral diplomacy. She has worked extensively with UN agencies, regional organizations, donors, and civil society organizations in promoting a critical role for multilateral peacebuilding. Ms. Pinilla has held political advisory positions for both the Assistant Secretary General and Secretary General of the OAS. Ms. Pinilla is co-editor of *Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean: Civic Engagement and the Democratic Mission* (2023, with Ronaldo Munck, Rita Hodges, and Catherine Bartch). She holds a MA in Conflict Management in Public Policy (1995) and a BA in Latin American Studies (1988) from George Mason University, graduate diplomas in peacebuilding from American University and Eastern Mennonite University. She is originally from Bogota, Colombia.



ROLANDO ENRIQUE PELICOT RUIZ

Rolando Enrique Pelicot Ruiz is a Panamanian economist, social entrepreneur, and youth advocate working at the intersection of peacebuilding, education, and meaningful youth participation. He is currently a member of the United Nations Working Group on Youth, which follows up on the implementation of the Pact for the Future, actively advancing meaningful youth engagement in global decision-making spaces. Rolando is the co-founder of Fipie, a digital volunteering platform that has mobilized over 1,200 young people in support of SDG 4 and SDG 13 initiatives. He also leads Buen Pela'o, a community-based project that promotes peace education and violence prevention. He has represented youth voices at high-level events such as the ECOSOC Youth Forum, the World Forum for Democracy, and the Regional Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Countries on Sustainable Development. He is passionate about creating inclusive spaces, strengthening youth participation in



decision-making processes, and using education as a tool for peace and social transformation.

FRANCIS W. PETERSEN

Prof Francis W. Petersen is a visionary leader in the South African higher education sector and the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Pretoria. He has previously held esteemed positions as Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of the Free State and Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Cape Town. Prof Petersen holds a PhD in Engineering from Stellenbosch University. His international speaking engagements include prominent conferences worldwide, contributing to the global discourse on higher education and research. Currently, he is the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Universities South Africa (USAf).



PAUL C. PRIBBENOW

Paul C. Pribbenow, Ph.D. is the 10th president of Augsburg University, located in the heart of Minneapolis, Minnesota (USA). Since joining Augsburg in 2006, Pribbenow has enhanced the College's role as an active community partner in its urban setting and championed the university's signature commitments to equity, inclusion, and community engagement. Before coming to Augsburg, Pribbenow served as president of Rockford College (now Rockford University) in Illinois. Pribbenow serves on the Board of Directors for Campus Compact and the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU), and is an active member of the Anchor Institution Task Force. He is the author of numerous articles and books, including *Radical Roots: How One Professor Changed a University's Legacy* (Myers Education Press, 2023). Pribbenow holds a BA from Luther College (Iowa), and an MA and PhD in social ethics from the University of Chicago.



SNJEŽANA PRIJIĆ-SAMARŽIJA

Snježana Prijić Samaržija, Ph.D., is a professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Rijeka. She recently completed her second term as the Rector of the University of Rijeka. Before her two mandates as rector, she spent eight years serving as the Vice-Rector for Students and Studies. Throughout sixteen years of active participation in university management, she has taken on the role of an expert in various national and international committees and advisory boards. She is President of the Rectors Forum of Southeast Europe and the Western Balkans. She was the President of YERUN (Young European Research University Network) and the Alpe-Adriatic Rectors Conference as well as a member of the Strategy Board of the European Alliance YUFE (Young Universities for the Future of Europe). She is a member of the



Steering Committee for Education (and Steering Committee Bureau) at the Council of Europe. In these roles, she has worked on fostering international partnerships and innovative research initiatives. She has founded the Centre for Advanced Studies Southeast Europe, which she also directs. She is the founder and first director of the University of Rijeka Foundation, and she is still in philanthropic activities through the position of President of the Board of directors of the Lürssen Foundation. The main areas of her scientific interest are social philosophy, political epistemology, and epistemology of democracy.

VILLANO QIRIAZI

Villano Qiriazzi is an experienced education policy leader with a long career at the Council of Europe, where he currently serves as Head of the Education Department. With a career spanning over two decades, he has been instrumental in shaping European education policies, advancing democratic citizenship, and developing human rights based digital transformation of education, as well as promoting ethics, transparency and academic integrity in higher education. Over the years, he has led major educational initiatives of the Council of Europe, represented the Organisation in high-level international fora (UNESCO, EU, OECD, BFUG), and managed strategic projects that have shaped European education systems in line with the Council of Europe's values and principles.



BEATRIZ RAHMER PAVEZ

Beatriz Rahmer Pavez is a Social Worker, holds a Master's degree in Gender Studies from Universidad de Chile, and is a PhD candidate in Higher Education at Universidad de Palermo, Argentina. She has worked in universities, the Ministry of Education of the Government of Chile, NGOs, and consultancies, focusing on the science-policy interface, public innovation, and inclusion in higher education. She contributed to the creation and strengthening of the PACE Program, a national public policy aimed at promoting inclusive access to higher education, developed with the support of UNESCO. Her current research focuses on the mechanisms through which academia engages with and influences public policymaking. She is the Deputy Director of the Office for Social and Public Innovation at Universidad de Chile. She is a member of the Núcleo de Estudios Sistémicos Transdisciplinarios (NEST), the Núcleo de Investigación en Interdisciplina y Transdisciplina para la Educación Superior (NITES), and represents her university in the international network Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities – EPIC-LAC.



AMY REID

Amy Reid is the Interim Director of PEN America's Freedom to Learn programme, coordinating efforts to push back against state-level government censorship in higher education. She is an ardent advocate for public education and the liberal arts. Amy joined PEN in 2024 from New College of Florida, where she was Professor of French and Director of the Gender Studies Programme. In 2023-2024, she was elected Chair of the Faculty and served on the NCF Board of Trustees, working to safeguard the principles of academic freedom in the Florida State University System. She holds a PhD in French from Yale University and is an award-winning translator of Francophone African fiction. She has collaborated with authors including Véronique Tadjo (*Far from My Father* (2014), Patrice Nganang (the *Cameroon Trilogy*, 2016-2022), Mutt-Lon (*The Blunder*, 2022), Blaise Ndala (*In the Belly of the Congo*, 2023), and Marie-Célie Agnant (*Rosa the Alligator*, forthcoming in 2025).



KIRSTEN ROBERTS-LYER

Kirsten Roberts Lyer is a specialist in international human rights law and practice. Dr Roberts Lyer is the Chair of the Human Rights Program and Associate Professor at the Department of Legal Studies. She works on issues relating to independent state-based human rights bodies, academic freedom and parliaments and human rights. Appointed as a member of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights' Scientific Committee (2023-2028), and elected as Chair for 2024-25, Dr Roberts Lyer is a recognised expert on National Human Rights Institutions and co-authored a leading publication on NHRIs published with Oxford University Press (2021) as well as *Change at the Top: The Necessity of Transitional Leadership Provisions in the Laws of Independent State-Based Institutions in the Journal of Human Rights Practice* (2023). Her research examines how to protect and strengthen independent state-level institutions that are vital to the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide. Her recent publications and policy contributions have focussed on the creation and development of effective NHRIs, parliamentary engagement with human rights, and academic freedom (university autonomy).



ZOLTÁN RÓNAY

Zoltán Rónay (1976) is a lawyer with a Ph.D. in law and political sciences and a habilitation in Educational Sciences. Between 2006 and 2015, he served as secretary-general of Eötvös Loránd University. Today, he is an associate professor at the same university's Faculty of Education and Psychology in the Institution of Education, where he served as a vice dean for education (2019-2025) and is still the head of the faculty quality management. As a university lecturer, he regularly has many general and education law thematic courses in Pedagogy, Educational Science, Management, and Human Resources. He is a supervisor in the Education Doctoral Programme. He is the academic director of the Erasmus Mundus



Programme Master in Research and Innovation in Higher Education (MARIHE) joint master program with the University of Krems. His research interests cover the entire field of education law, especially higher education and public education, with special emphasis on institutional autonomy and academic freedom. He served as an expert on academic freedom for the Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Services (EPRS), Secretariat of the European Parliament Scientific Foresight Unit, Panel for the Future of Science and Technology (STOA). Today, he is one of the nine working group expert members of the Council of Europe, Democratic Mission of Higher Education (2024-2027) – Academic Freedom in Action.

PIL MARIA SAUGMANN

Pil Maria Saugmann is the president of the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (Eurodoc). She holds a PhD in theoretical physics from Stockholm University. Her current research is in higher education and science and technology studies. She contributes to Eurodoc's policy and advocacy work on a wide array of topics including academic freedom and is part of the team behind Eurodoc's ValDem program. She is a member of the Bureau of CDEDU as a representative of the academic community.



ARNO SCHROOYEN

Arno Schrooyen is currently the vice president of the European Student Union (ESU), from Brussels and has been active in the student movement for the past seven years. His main areas of expertise include the social dimension of higher education, internationalisation and mobility, citizenship education, and vocational education and training. Prior to joining the ESU's Executive Committee in 2023/24, he studied a bachelor's degree in hotel management in Brussels and is now doing a master degree in administrative sciences in Brussels.



NINOSLAV ŠČUKANEC SCHMIDT

Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt is the founder and Executive Director (since 1999) of the Institute for the Development of Education in Zagreb, Croatia. With over two decades of experience, he has dedicated his career to shaping higher education policies across Europe and beyond. His expertise includes institutional governance, strategic management, financing, equity, inclusion, the social dimension, community engagement, and quality assurance in higher education, as well as the development of qualifications frameworks. Ninoslav has played an influential role in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) as co-chair of the Bologna Follow-up Group's (BFUG) Working Group on Social Dimension from 2018 to 2024. Beyond the EHEA, Ninoslav serves as an expert for the Council of



Europe, contributing to the development of its Higher Education Policy portfolio and participating in the Working Group on the Democratic Mission of Higher Education. He is also a member of the Advisory Board of the World Access to Higher Education Network. In Croatia, he has significantly influenced the higher education landscape as a member of many national councils and committees.

MARIA NIEVES TAPIA

Nieves Tapia is the founder and Director for CLAYSS, Latin American Center for Solidarity Service-learning, an NGO based in Buenos Aires, Argentina, since 2002. From 1997 to 2010 she directed Argentina Ministry of Education's first National service-learning programs, currently "Programa Nacional Educación Solidaria." From Argentina, she contributed to spread service-learning policies and practices in Latin American and around the world. In 2005 she co-founded the Iberian-American Service-learning Network, now led by CLAYSS and NYLC. She is also a founding Board member of IARSLCE, International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (2006-2008). She served in Talloires Network of Engaged Universities Steering Committee (2014-2019), and since 2019 is a member of the Academy of Community Engagement Scholarship (ACES). In 2023 she received the Distinguished Career Award from IARSLCE. Tapia has published more than 11 books and 100 articles in several languages, and offered hundreds of lectures, courses and technical assistance on service-learning around the world.



HILLIGE VAN'T LAND

Dr. Hilligje van't Land serves the global higher education community as Secretary-General of the International Association of Universities (IAU). Founded in 1950 under the auspices of UNESCO, the IAU celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. The IAU is the leading global association of higher education institutions and organizations worldwide. Independent and membership-based, it brings together HE leaders from over 130 countries to identify, reflect on, and act on shared priorities. Since 2017, Dr. van't Land promotes the key role of HE in societal transformation, overseeing the global program of activities, developing strategic plans, and supervising the day-to-day work of the IAU. More than ever, she believes in the importance of international cooperation in HE and the promotion of intercultural understanding. The outcomes of this year's Global Forum will help inform the next IAU International Conference on "Building Trust in Higher Education," to be held at the University of Rwanda in Kigali, in October 2025. See: www.IAUKigali2025.net



VÁCLAV VELČOVSKÝ

Václav Velčovský combines both academic and policy making assets in his career. Since 2015, he holds the position of Vice-Minister, currently DG, at the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports of the Czech Republic, in charge of international cooperation, European Union affairs and European Funds, especially for regional schools, HEIs and research and development. Under his leadership, the ESIF were used for paradigmatic changes in the Czech educational and research ecosystem. He initiated vigorous measures in education and research after Russian aggression in Ukraine. In previous decades, he worked at the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic where he was responsible for international affairs, and at the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic with focus on civil service reform. He studied Czech Language, Literature and History at the Charles University (Master), Slavonic Studies at the University Leipzig (Erasmus) and Pedagogy at the Charles University (Ph.D.). He is author of four monographs and dozens scientific articles on Czech-German relations' history or language and education policy. He is fluent in English and German.



BYRON WHITE

Dr. Byron P. White is Associate Provost for Urban Research and Community Engagement at the University of North Carolina Charlotte where he oversees the urbanCORE (Community - Oriented Research and Engagement) office charged with mobilizing, assessing, and advancing efforts that connect the university's interdisciplinary, urban research resources to community assets. Dr. White has spent his career as a journalist and administrator in academic, corporate, non-profit, and public sectors facilitating mutually beneficial engagement between institutions and urban communities. He has a doctorate in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania, is a research associate at the Kettering Foundation, and serves on the advisory board of the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University.



DAWN MICHELE WHITEHEAD

Dawn Michele Whitehead, Ph.D., is the Vice President of the Office of Global Citizenship for Campus, Community, and Careers at the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Her work focuses on advancing practices and strategies to integrate global, civic, and experiential learning across curricular and co-curricular initiatives and practices that advance equitable participation in global and community-based learning. She has authored and presented nationally and internationally. She is an inaugural member of the Institute for International Education's National Academy for International Education and serves as vice-chair of the board of The Forum on Education Abroad.



RADKA WILDOVÁ

Radka Wildová graduated from the Faculty of Education of Charles University. Since 1989 she has worked at the Department of Primary Pedagogy of Charles University and professionally deals with the development of initial reading literacy and pre-literacy within the framework of his scientific research and teaching activities. After being the vice-dean of studies at the Faculty of Education of Charles University, she became the dean of the faculty (2009 - 2017). From 2017 to 2022 she was Charles University's Vice-Rector for the Concept and Quality of Education. Since February 2022 she has been the Director General for Higher Education, Science and Research at the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. In this position, her chief focus is on increasing the quality of higher education, its flexibility and modernization, as well as on supporting large research infrastructures and excellent research projects. Radka Wildová is the author or co-author of a number of important publications and professional papers related to the development of reading literacy and pre-literacy. Her activity in the field of doctoral studies is extensive. She is a member of several domestic and foreign professional organizations, groups and expert teams (e.g., International Reading Association, Council of Europe – Committee for the Development of Educational Activities).

