



DIVERSITY & INNOVATION CONFERENCE

May 30-31, 2025

Wrocław (Poland) & Zoom

Conference Handbook

DIVERSITY & INNOVATION CONFERENCE

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Dear Colleagues, Friends and Changemakers,

For the past two years, it's been my dream to once again hold a space where people from around the world can connect, share, and get inspired. There was never enough time or resources to make it happen, until now.

This year, with the support of our ELEVATE project partners, SIETAR Polska and WrOpenUP, I finally found the momentum to bring this dream to life. In the past weeks, I've poured my heart into this, putting business (and probably my health!) on hold, and riding the full creative force of my ADHD energy. Special thanks to Aneta Długopolska and Barbara Covarrubias for believing in this dream and for your commitment to making this event a success, and to all the friends and colleagues who responded to the call for proposals. Without your trust and support, this wouldn't have been possible.

Today, I'm proud to share the full program of our upcoming conference! If you care about diversity, social innovation, and meaningful growth, don't miss this very special event—in one of Europe's most magical cities: **Wrocław**.



With this event, we're not only celebrating the **5th anniversary** of the **Academy for Diversity & Innovation**, but also proudly joining the **European Month of Diversity**, a perfect moment to reflect, connect, and grow.

We invite you to join researchers and practitioners from around the world as we explore intercultural competence, happy (because inclusive) workplaces, and growth. Together, we will reflect on current and future trends in intercultural training and consulting, explore the evolving landscape of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB), deepen our understanding of social justice, engage with Social Innovation 4.0, and examine the role of AI-assisted instructional design.

With over 50 sessions, both onsite in Wrocław and online, this gathering is more than a conference. It's a collective commitment to impact. We warmly welcome everyone passionate about growth and broadening perspectives toward diversity, inclusion, justice, and equity. Let's walk the talk together!

Let's #Elevate the field of intercultural training to the next level!.

Saludos cordiales desde Málaga,
Anna Zelno

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From Conference Partners



SIETARPOLSKA

SIETAR Polska is dedicated to fostering human connection and understanding through empathy, intercultural dialogue, and inclusive practices across academic, professional, and social domains. We warmly welcome speakers and guests from around the world, creating a respectful and vibrant space for the exchange of diverse perspectives. Rooted in Poland's long-standing tradition of hospitality, we cultivate an open environment where diversity is embraced as a vital force for humanity, development, and innovation. If you'd like to join the SIETAR Polska Community and become a member, contact us at info@sietar.pl



Join us in Wrocław for a unique conference experience rooted in diversity, learning, and social innovation. WrOpenUp, a volunteer-driven initiative from 37 countries, is a living example of how local action can spark global change. We believe in learning through real experiences—not lectures. This conference is your chance to connect, exchange, and be part of a community that turns openness into action. Let's shape the future together.



Join us in Wrocław or on Zoom for a unique learning experience shaped by the **ELEVATE project**. We believe that real change in intercultural training happens when we come together to share ideas, reflect on challenges, and co-create new solutions. Our goal is to develop inclusive, future-oriented methodologies that lead to sustainable learning and meaningful impact across organizations and communities. This conference is more than an event. It's part of a shared journey. Whether you're a practitioner, educator, or advocate for inclusion, your voice matters, and we can't do it without you.

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World Café | 30 May 16:00 - 18:00 | In-Person

World Café Session

Moderated by [Dr. Andrea Cnyrim](#) and [Anna Zelno](#)

Theme: Future-Proofing Intercultural Training – New Approaches and Challenges

Prof. Dr. Andrea Cnyrim is a Professor at Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences with international experience in higher education. She specializes in intercultural communication, training, coaching, and teaching. She has published in three languages and works across cultures. She is part of the research team at intercultures España & LATAM for the ELEVATE project.

Anna Zelno is a Diversity & Innovation Strategist and co-founder of the Academy for Diversity and Innovation. She designs data-driven solutions that foster inclusion, equity, and collaboration across cultures—supporting global teams to grow and thrive.

In today's complex world, intercultural competence is more important than ever. Yet traditional approaches are no longer enough. As global mobility increases, AI transforms how we learn, and conversations about identity become more nuanced, we must rethink intercultural training itself: its purpose, structure, and relevance.

We begin with a connection activity called **The Harmony Map**, inspired by the song [Layers by Naïka](#) and designed by Anna Zelno with the support of ChatGPT. Rather than focus on where we're from or what groups we belong to, we'll explore how we think, feel, and experience the world. By discovering shared values and habits, we'll form "harmony groups" based on what resonates beneath the surface - celebrating the beautiful, layered complexity that connects us.

This sets the tone for the **World Café**, a participatory method where participants rotate between discussion tables, exploring key questions and building on each other's ideas. Following the [Seven Design Principles of World Café](#), we'll listen deeply, connect diverse perspectives, and harvest shared insights.

We take inspiration from **Martha Maznevski**, who reminds us: *"We need to take our own definitions of culture more seriously and apply them more broadly beyond just national cultures."* Designing inclusive training means embracing this complexity.

Discussion topics will include assessment methods, long-term learning impact, AI-assisted training, organizational learning ecosystems, and how to reflect intersectional belonging and transcultural perspectives in future-ready intercultural programs.

Let's elevate the conversation and the field together.

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Online Sessions - Short Version

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ONLINE PROGRAM - MORNING SESSIONS

	TRACK A	TRACK B	TRACK C
09:00 – 10:00 CET 03:00 – 04:00 ET 16:00–17:00 CST	Opening Session Innovation begins with shared humanity: Reconnecting in a disconnected world by Dr. Darla K. Deardorff		
10:00 – 11:30 CET 04:00 – 05:30 ET 17:00–18:30 CST	Creating meaningful conversations driven by data and rooted in science (hybrid) Workshop by Csaba Toth	1. Diversity wheel – gamified approach for DEIB training by Pooranasoundari Venkatesan & Usha Krishnan 2. Transcend beyond labels: Instilling an un-label mindset to unlock workplace inclusion by Darren Chong 3. Unlocking innovation: Key challenges to psychological safety in culturally diverse teams by Agnieszka Ches 4. The TOPOI model and TOPOI GPT (AI BOT) by Arjan Verdooren	1. The role of intercultural competence in the internationalisation of higher education by Andrea Martinez Celis 2. Understanding students' attitudes toward diversity by Ursula Brinkmann, Eryka Aniol 3. How to create an Intention Statement to cover DEI in 2 minutes by Vincent Stevenson
11:30 – 12:00 CET	Coffee Break		
12:00 – 13:30 CET 06:00 – 07:30 ET 19:00 – 20:30 CST	Storytelling as a tool for cross-cultural understanding Workshop by Pooranasoundari Venkatesan & Usha Krishnan	1. Abortion rights and gender-based violence in Romania: A path to social justice and equity by Andreea Oprea 2. Impact of the Korean Wave – Values and culture shaping intercultural approach in Asia and Pacific by Lidia Maria Wiśniewska 3. Social innovation 4.0 for pandemic recovery: Gitarja Bhumi's journey to empower women-led MSMEs and women-led MSMEs with disabilities in rural Indonesia by Kharolin Hilda Amazona	Future-Proofing Intercultural Training: Insights and Innovations from ELEVATE 60 min Workshop by Naiara Arnaez, Anna Zelno & Lina Klemkaite Numbers Stand for People: Finding Humanity in Data 30 min Presentation by Amna Ben Amara (onsite) & Peter Mousaferiadis (online)
13:30 – 14:45 CET	Lunch Break		

ONLINE PROGRAM - AFTERNOON SESSIONS

	TRACK A	TRACK B	TRACK C
14:45 – 15:00 CET 8:45 – 9:00 ET 9:45 – 10:00 CST	Insights from Diversity Atlas: Presentations and Snapshot Analysis		
15:00 – 16:30 CET 9:00 – 10:30 ET 10:00 – 11:30 CST	Trump's DEI push back in a historical perspective Workshop by Dr. Livingstone Thompson	1. Turning diversity data into action: How to build inclusive workplaces with smart metrics by Stela Suijs Cuesta 2. From data to impact: The power of DEI metrics by Laura Inés Fernández 3. Adaption and growth: How disruptive change transformed employee training and development in a global IT organization by Jessica Mesquita 4. Inclusive Co-Facilitation - From preparation to impact: What we can do before, during, and after to create truly inclusive learning spaces together by Barbara Covarrubias, Eithne Knappitsch & Anna Zinenko	Decolonising Intercultural Education Workshop by Daniela Felletti & Anjam Chaudhary [online only]
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17:00 – 18:30 CET 11:00 – 12:30 ET 12:00 – 1:30 CST	A Symptomatic approach to global intercultural competence Workshop by Dr. Linda Ridley & Dr. Edgar Ridley	1. From buzzwords to business impact: Merging CLIL, DEIB & AI for next-gen business english training by Reena Rana 2. Leveraging global competence for social innovation: Integrating a global competence framework into university curricula as a driver for social change by Amaia Ojer 3. Living the Mix: How Interconnectedness and Global Mobility Are Shaping and Reshaping Intercultural Skills Daily by Pavle Luger 4. From gendered discourse to inclusive representation: A sociolinguistic analysis of gender equality strategies in the olympic and paralympic games by Jingfan Zhang	Gamification and storytelling: Benefits and challenges Workshop by George Simons & Dr. Darren Chong
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Opening Session

09:00 to 10:00

Innovation begins with shared humanity: Reconnecting in a disconnected world by [Dr. Darla K. Deardorff](#)

Dr. Darla K. Deardorff is a leading expert in international education and global leadership. She serves as Executive Director of the Association of International Education Administrators, holds the UNESCO Chair of Intercultural Competence at Stellenbosch University, and is a research fellow at Duke University. She is also the founding president of the World Council on Intercultural and Global Competence.

Abstract: In this opening conversation, Anna Zelno interviews Prof. Darla Deardorff on how recognizing our shared humanity can unlock innovation in diverse teams and communities. Together, they explore how empathy, storytelling, and meaningful connection can transform how we work, lead, and create in a fragmented world.

Description: What if the key to innovation isn't just new ideas—but deeper human connection? In this powerful opening dialogue, Anna Zelno interviews Prof. Darla Deardorff, renowned expert in global education and dialogue, to explore how recognizing our shared humanity can fuel inclusive innovation. Drawing on years of work across cultures, sectors, and communities, Prof. Deardorff shares insights on the power of empathy, listening, and storytelling in shaping environments where everyone can contribute their full potential. Together, they invite us to reimagine collaboration not just as a strategy, but as a human practice—one that begins with connection and leads to transformation.

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Track A: 90-minute online workshops

10:00 to 11:30

Creating meaningful leadership conversations driven by data and rooted in science, by [Csaba Toth](#)

Csaba is the founder of ICQ Global, the leading experts in measuring and optimising psychological safety, motivational drivers and cognitive diversity, the biomarkers of high-performance in teams. Author, member of the HBR Advisory Council, Forbes Coaches Council, developer of the ICF accredited, multi award-winning Global DISC and Growth Zone methodologies.

Abstract: This interactive, evidence-based workshop helps DEI and leadership professionals drive measurable impact and build a purpose-driven practice. Discover the 9 biomarkers of high performance, the 3 obstacles that get in the way, and 3 real case studies. Through engaging activities like the “fortune cookie” and “cow exercise,” participants explore psychological safety, motivation, and cognitive diversity. Includes a digital workbook for ongoing learning.

Description: This dynamic, research-based workshop explores how to deliver measurable ROI in DEI and leadership development, while building a meaningful legacy as a coach or consultant. Participants will discover a data-driven, scalable solution to assess and enhance psychological safety, motivational drivers, and cognitive diversity. The session combines science and practice through interactive activities, including the “fortune cookie” team conversation, a staged example of poor feedback, and the “cow exercise” to explore different perspectives. Breakout discussions will challenge participants to reflect on how disengagement risks an organization’s future. Key learning outcomes include understanding the 9 biomarkers of high performance, identifying 3 common obstacles, and analyzing 3 real case studies. To support knowledge retention, an editable digital workbook is provided, along with access to additional resources such as Uncommon Sense.

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12:00 to 13:30

Storytelling as a tool for cross-cultural understanding, by [Pooranasoundari Venkatesan](#) and [Usha Krishnan](#)

Pooranasoundari Venkatesan is a certified intercultural trainer and language coach. Facilitator of workshops in various multinational companies, schools and universities. Presented and published papers on innovative teaching and training methodologies.

Usha Krishnan is a certified intercultural trainer and language coach, specializing in delivering workshops for multinational organizations, schools, and universities. Speaker with a focus on innovative teaching strategies and intercultural communication.

Abstract: In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to navigate cultural differences is essential for effective communication and collaboration. Storytelling serves as a powerful and innovative tool in intercultural training, enabling individuals to develop empathy, gain deeper cultural awareness, and bridge communication gaps.

Description: This session explores how storytelling can be meaningfully integrated into intercultural training to foster immersive, emotionally engaging learning experiences. We will share practical methods and ideas for using narrative as a tool to bridge cultural perspectives and stimulate deep reflection. Participants will take part in activities designed to create an immersive environment, including visual storytelling through comic strips and presentations based on traditional folklore. We'll also explore the use of generative AI as a storytelling co-creator, demonstrating how emerging technologies can support the co-creation of intercultural narratives. Through this experience, participants will gain insights into the emotional impact of cultural misalignment, enhance creativity and collaborative learning, and reflect critically on cultural bias embedded in data and technology. The session highlights embodied storytelling, learning through emotion and experience, and perspective shifts that challenge assumptions and foster cultural empathy. By blending folk narratives with modern media and using gamification, complex cultural concepts become more tangible and engaging. Participants will leave with practical, inclusive tools for intercultural learning across both traditional and digital formats.

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15:00 to 16:30

Trump's DEI push-back in a historical perspective, by [Dr. Livingstone Thompson](#)

Livingstone Thompson, PhD, is a Jamaican-born intercultural trainer based in Northern Ireland. He specializes in cultural competence, DEI, and anti-racism, with extensive experience in training, research, and consultancy across Europe and the Caribbean.

Abstract: The recent drive by large companies to roll back on DEI policies must be seen in a historical perspective. It reveals the insincerity and lip service, which many of us suspected characterised their take up of DEI policies. In a way that is analogous to the promotion of anti-racism, those who stand to lose the most from the promotion DEI, are those who benefit from the freedom to practice exclusion. Seen in a longer historical context, it is driven by racist mindset and ideology. The inconvenience and backlash against the end to exclusion in the 1960's was never really settled and part of what we are seeing today. DEIB specialists must frame their action and reaction against this historical backdrop.

Description: By the end of the session, participants will be able to contextualize contemporary DEI rollbacks by examining their historical roots - drawing clear parallels between today's anti-DEI sentiment and resistance during the Civil Rights era. Through an analysis of structural racism in employment practices, they will explore how post-emancipation labor dynamics continue to shape corporate hiring biases and patterns of exclusion. Participants will also be encouraged to critically assess the sincerity of corporate DEI commitments, considering both their structural integration and the factors contributing to recent regressions. The session will use historical analysis, including comparative timelines and case studies from the 1960s to the present, to illuminate recurring patterns in resistance to equity. A Q&A session will open space for discussion around real-world corporate examples, while reflection activities will prompt participants to consider both personal and organizational roles in perpetuating or challenging systemic exclusion.

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17:00 to 18:30

A symptomatic approach to global intercultural competence, by [Dr. Linda Ridley](#) and [Edgar J. Ridley](#)

Linda Ridley, Ed.D., MBA, is a CEO of Edgar J. Ridley & Associates, a global consulting firm. She is also on faculty at City University of New York. Prior to teaching and consulting, Linda spent over two decades as a Director of Investment Banking at Wells Fargo Advisors.

Edgar J. Ridley, Chairman of Edgar J. Ridley & Associates, is an expert on symbolic behavior and its impact on culture. Mr. Ridley invented a concept he titled the Symptomatic Thought Process®, the implementation of which transforms human behavior.

Abstract: A Symptomatic Thought Process is defined as a thinking process that eschews superstition, mythology and rituals. It is little understood that education, built on a platform of eugenics, unfortunately created a myth of racial superiority worldwide. Participants will gain skills for problem-solving within DEIB by enhancing their understanding of the mythologies that inform academia and consulting.

Description: The workshop explores how symbolic thought - through rituals, myths, and superstitions - shapes human behavior and impacts DEIB. Participants are introduced to the Symptomatic Thought Process®, a method for shifting behaviors rooted in symbolic conditioning. Through interactive activities (icebreakers, role-plays, case studies, videos, live polls, reflection), they apply the concept to real-life DEIB challenges. By the end, participants will understand the hidden impact of symbolic systems, gain tools to implement behavior change, and enhance their ability to act as effective, conscious agents of inclusion.

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Track B: 20-minute online presentations

10:00 to 11:30

Transcend beyond labels: Instilling an *Un-label Mindset* to unlock workplace inclusion, by [Dr. Darren Chong](#)

Darren, a consultant and coach, authored 3 books including *diversophy®*, champions culturally sensitive approaches to inclusion. With global experience across 7 countries, he merges culture, data, and AI to shape human-centered change.

Abstract: This session will unpack the meaning of labeling and emphasize why un-labeling is necessary, only when labels limit potential and hinder inclusive progress. Attendees will learn about five identity-based labels that influence workplaces around the world and gain insight into how these labels shape behavior, access to opportunities, and experiences of inclusion. The session will introduce the "Unlabel Mindset" as a practical approach to fostering inclusive practices, and participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own perspectives using the Unlabel Mindset Survey.

Description: Although the concept of labeling has long been studied in sociology, its impact in the workplace remains underexplored. Labels based on race, gender, age, disability, and role often restrict individual growth and reinforce stereotypes. This session will unpack the meaning of labeling and emphasize why un-labeling is necessary, only when labels limit potential and hinder inclusive progress. Attendees will explore how to apply the un-label mindset to foster more inclusive and empowering practices. The session blends an engaging presentation with case examples and concludes with the Unlabel Mindset Survey, a reflective tool to identify labeling behaviors in the workplace. While DEI(B) concepts often face cultural resistance, especially in non-Western contexts; un-label offers an innovative, inclusive framework applicable across all cultures. Instead of focusing on categories, it promotes identity inclusion by valuing the whole person.

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Diversity wheel: Gamified approach for DEIB training, by [Pooranasoundari Venkatesan](#) and [Usha Krishnan](#)

Pooranasoundari Venkatesan is a certified intercultural trainer and language coach. Facilitator of workshops in various multinational companies, schools and universities. Presented and published papers on innovative teaching and training methodologies.

Usha Krishnan is a certified intercultural trainer and language coach, specializing in delivering workshops for multinational organizations, schools, and universities. Speaker with a focus on innovative teaching strategies and intercultural communication.

Abstract: The Diversity Wheel illustrates different dimensions of diversity that influence people's identities, experiences, and interactions. It helps in understanding diversity beyond visible traits and is often used in intercultural and DEIB training. This session offers an innovative take on the Diversity Wheel through hands-on activities that deepen engagement with identity and inclusion.

Description: This interactive session introduces the Diversity Wheel as a powerful tool to explore the visible and invisible dimensions of identity in intercultural and DEIB training. Participants will gain an understanding of the model and how it can be applied creatively in learning environments. The session features two experiential activities drawn from our training practice: "Diversity Jenga," which invites reflection on the seen and unseen aspects of self, and "Cultural Constellations," a dynamic exercise for mapping connections across differences. Alongside a brief theoretical overview and a Q&A session, participants will engage in hands-on learning that equips them with innovative strategies to present the Diversity Wheel in their own workshops. By the end of the session, attendees will feel confident using the model to foster deeper conversations around identity, inclusion, and belonging.

Unlocking innovation: Key challenges to psychological safety in culturally diverse teams, by [Agnieszka Ches](#)

Agnieszka Ches, is a professor, business consultant, and project manager with vast expertise in cross-cultural management and global marketing. She lives in Paris and works daily in a culturally diverse environment. She holds a Ph.D. in Economics, a Doctoral Diploma in Cross-cultural Communication (Univ. de Valladolid), and an MBA (Aalto University).

Abstract: Discover how psychological safety fuels team innovation. This session explores its crucial link to cohesion and information flow, which are vital for creative output. We'll examine challenges posed by cultural diversity, where differences can hinder these key elements. Learn practical

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facilitation and management tools, grounded in peer-reviewed research and practitioner insights, to build safe, productive, and innovative diverse teams.

Description: This presentation addresses the critical relationship between psychological safety and innovative output within culturally diverse teams. It will examine the challenges posed by cultural diversity to the establishment of psychological safety, specifically impacting team cohesion and information exchange, both pivotal for creative productivity. A comprehensive literature review, encompassing recent peer-reviewed research, will be presented, elucidating the mitigating factors inherent in cultural diversity. The session will explore practical facilitation and team management methodologies, derived from empirical research and practitioner-based innovation models, designed to mitigate these challenges. Participants will gain a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between psychological safety, cultural diversity, and innovative outcomes. The session aims to provide a theoretical and applied framework for fostering environments conducive to innovation in globalized team settings.

The TOPOI model and TOPOI GPT (AI BOT), by [Arjan Verdooren](#)

Arjan Verdooren is a consultant, lecturer and researcher in ICC and DE&I. He is a long time associate of the Royal Tropical Institute, a knowledge center in Amsterdam, and co-author of 'Diversity Competence, Cultures Don't Meet, People Do.

Abstract: In this presentation we will discuss the TOPOI Model and the AI BOT it has powered: TOPOI GPT. Different from most approaches to intercultural communication, TOPOI doesn't take culture as such as its starting point, but the interaction and communication between unique individuals, embedded in their social contexts. The TOPOI model itself is an analytical tool to detect possible misunderstandings during or after an intercultural encounter.

Description: 1. In this session, we will introduce the TOPOI model (Hoffman, 2015, 2018, 2020; Hoffman & Verdooren, 2018; Hoffman, Verdooren & Laurent, 2024) and some of its main backgrounds, and we will briefly demonstrate the TOPOI GPT AI Bot. 2. Instead of taking culture as such as its starting point, TOPOI focuses on the interaction and communication between unique individuals, embedded in their social contexts. In doing so, TOPOI humanises otherness: the other is just as complex and multi-layered as we are ourselves, and intercultural communication is always interpersonal. 3. Participants will gain a basic understanding of the model and its benefits and possibilities. 4. Presentation with examples, case-situations and possibility to respond via chat. 5. The session presents both a model that represents a non-essentialist, dynamic approach to interculturality, and an AI-Bot that applies this model to real-life situations and learning questions.

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12:00 to 13:30

Abortion rights and gender-based violence in Romania: A path to social justice and equity, by [Andreea Opreescu](#)

Andreea is an experienced Public Policy Manager with a proven track record in public affairs and policy. Advocate for equality with a PhD in Gender Studies from Universitat de Barcelona.

Abstract: This session examines how restricted abortion access and gender-based violence (GBV) in Romania intersect with social justice and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). It introduces Social Innovation 4.0—tech-driven, data-informed solutions that foster equity and inclusion. Participants will learn strategies for gender-responsive innovation, how social innovation advances justice, and how to apply DEIB frameworks for institutional and policy change.

Description: Abortion Rights and Gender-Based Violence in Romania: A Policy Path to Social Justice and Equity This session explores how limited abortion access and gender-based violence (GBV) in Romania intersect with social justice and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). It introduces Social Innovation 4.0—tech-driven, data-informed, and community-led solutions that advance equity through inclusive design. In this context, it empowers vulnerable groups via improved access to reproductive care, digital safety tools, and cross-sector collaboration. The session links social innovation to justice by addressing systemic barriers. It also highlights how institutions and workplaces can embed DEIB through inclusive policies, trauma-informed support, and reproductive health access. Participants will gain: Tools to apply DEIB in organisational and policy contexts Strategies for gender-responsive innovation Insights on reforming systems through justice-centered approaches.

Impact of the Korean Wave: Values and culture shaping intercultural approach in Asia and the Pacific, by [Dr. Lidia Maria Wiśniewska](#)

Lidia is an international educator, evaluator, and strategist. International Doctorate of Science in Education. Based in Paris, Research Professor at CENTRUM PUCP in Peru and SIETAR Polska President. Expertise: international education, intercultural competence.

Abstract: This session explores Hallyu's role in shaping intercultural interactions in the Indo-Pacific, examining its integration into global cultural frameworks. Using theories from education and cultural studies, it highlights Hallyu's impact on soft power, diplomacy, and identity shifts. Participants will

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gain insights into cultural exchange, explore case studies, and reflection on Hallyu's evolving influence in global culture. Koreanization or maybe Americanisation, or Globalisation with Korean Face in Asia?

Description: This session explores how the Korean Wave (Hallyu) serves as a key force in shaping cultural diplomacy and soft power in the Indo-Pacific. The session will discuss how Hallyu integrates Western concepts of global culture, social justice, innovation, and others into Asian societies, fostering a shift in regional identity and aspirations. Some insights into how Korean culture serves as a conduit for global cultural values in Asia-Pacific societies and in South Korea itself will be discussed. Examples of cultural impact will be presented. Exploration of the evolving impact of cultural diplomacy in an era of globalisation and regionalisation will be highlighted. An open question for the audience will be used. Added value of this session is brought by professional interdisciplinary reflection (sociology, education, culture, diplomacy) on the power of cultural diplomacy, double meaning of innovation (Koreanisation - Americanisation - globalisation) and diversity.

Social innovation 4.0 for pandemic recovery: Gitarja Bhumi's journey to empower women-led MSMEs and women-led MSMEs with disabilities in rural Indonesia, by Kharolin Hilda Amazona

Kharolin Hilda Amazona is a social entrepreneur and DEI advocate with 6+ years of experience in women's economic empowerment, working with underrepresented groups in rural Indonesia. She is Communication Officer at intercultures España & LATAM for ELEVATE.

Abstract: Discover how Gitarja Bhumi Social Enterprise led by young changemakers is using Social Innovation 4.0 for post-pandemic economic recovery by empowering women-led MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) and MSMEs led by women with disabilities in rural areas in Indonesia. This session will share practical and inclusive strategies to inspire participants working in the fields of social innovation, DEIB, and community empowerment.

Description: This session highlights how Gitarja Bhumi Social Enterprise, led by young changemakers, empowered women-led MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) and women-led MSMEs with disability in rural Indonesia post-pandemic using Social Innovation 4.0. Participants will learn how digital tools and inclusive strategies support sustainable recovery. Through storytelling, real case studies, and interactive discussions, the session connects local action to global innovation. It's innovative in showing how marginalized communities benefit from digital platforms, local talents, local resources, and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

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15:00 to 16:30

Turning diversity data into action: How to build inclusive workplaces with smart metrics, by [Stela Suils Cuesta](#)

Stela Suils Cuesta is a DEI strategist and founder of Diversalytics, an ethical AI + analytics tool that helps organizations transform diversity data into business impact. She specializes in building data-driven, people-centered inclusion strategies.

Abstract: Data is everywhere, but how do we turn numbers into real inclusion? In this session, Stela shares her strategy for translating complex DEI data into clear, actionable insights. Using Diversalytics' methodology, she will show how ethical data collection, smart metrics, and EU-aligned practices can empower leaders to drive measurable and sustainable workplace inclusion.

Description: In Europe, organizations face unique challenges when collecting and using Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) data, due to privacy regulations and cultural barriers. Yet, EU bodies are increasingly encouraging companies to gather equality data to drive real change. In this session, DEI strategist Stela Suils Cuesta will reveal how she built Diversalytics — an ethical AI + analytics platform that helps companies simplify gender equality compliance and transform data into strategic inclusion actions. She will share how data, when collected ethically and strategically, can bridge the gap companies experience between compliance and cultural transformation. The session will include examples of how to align with EU guidelines, collect the right data, and use it to drive sustainable, measurable inclusion.

From data to impact: The power of DEI metrics, by [Laura Inés Fernández](#)

Laura is CEO & Co-founder of Bein Mindset, a DEI assessment tech startup. With 20+ years in consulting, she advocates for evidence-based decision-making, transforming workplaces through equity and leadership.

Abstract: This session highlights how effective DEI measurement drives impactful and profitable strategies. We will present the DEI Standard Index®, developed by Bein Mindset in collaboration with the University of Barcelona, a pioneering model to evaluate DEI management maturity and its impact. Participants will explore essential metrics, key findings, and common challenges while gaining practical tools to transform data into actionable insights and effectively communicate organizational impact.

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Description: In this session we will explore the DEI Standard Index® model, a groundbreaking tool developed by Bein Mindset in collaboration with researchers from the University of Barcelona. This model allows us to evaluate, measure and compare the maturity and efficiency of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion management and its impact. Based on international standards and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the DEI Standard Index® provides a comprehensive view through 10 dimensions of diversity and three key impact areas: Strategy and Leadership, Talent Management and HR, and Stakeholder Communication. The session will cover three main areas: 1) measuring DEI by addressing its scope, critical issues, and potential risks; 2) investing in DEI through data-driven decision-making, initiative justification, and impact evaluation; and 3) building a compelling narrative that highlights the influence of DEI efforts on organizational performance and culture. Through real-world examples, participants will learn how this model has helped organizations identify critical areas, reduce diagnostic time, and build strong narratives that demonstrate their commitment to inclusion. In addition, strategies for increasing participation in DEI impact surveys and the results of evaluations conducted in real companies will be presented. This session offers a unique approach to turning data into action that transforms organizational cultures toward a more inclusive future.

Adaption and growth: How disruptive change transformed employee training and development in a global IT organization, by [Jessica Mesquita](#)

Born in Brazil but a global citizen. I have lived in Spain, England and India for studies, volunteering and work. Degree in International Business, MBA in People Management with specialization in Multicultural Teams and Intercultural Intelligence, and currently master student in Intercultural Studies. Work experience in international human resources, intercultural training and global mobility. Nowadays, coordinating the training department of a global IT consultancy, supporting projects in Latin America.

Abstract: This session explores how a disruptive global change reshaped employee training and development in a multinational IT organization. We'll examine the strategic response that balanced necessity with a virtuous intent, ensuring workforce adaptability and survival. Participants will gain insights into learning approaches, strategies, and practical frameworks for navigating change, equipping them to drive transformation in their own organizations.

Description: This session explores how a disruptive global change reshaped employee training and development in a multinational IT organization. We'll examine the strategic response that balanced necessity with a virtuous intent, ensuring workforce adaptability and survival. Participants will gain insights into learning approaches, strategies, and practical frameworks for navigating change, equipping them to drive transformation in their own organizations. An interactive presentation on the case study, and group discussions will engage participants, fostering collaborative learning and

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diffusion of innovation. This session introduces a useful approach that integrates adaptive learning, offering a fresh perspective on workforce resilience in times of disruption.

Inclusive co-facilitation from preparation to impact: What we can do before, during, and after to create truly inclusive learning spaces together, by [Barbara Covarrubias](#), [Eithne Knappitsch](#) and [Anna Zinenko](#)

Researcher, speaker, and virtual learning expert, **Bárbara** inspires new ways of working and leading. As co-founder of the Global Case Study Challenge and creator of #virtualspacehero, she energizes teams to thrive in digital spaces.

Professor of Intercultural Management, co-founder of the Global Case Study Challenge, and SEED-Lab leader, **Eithne** builds bridges across cultures. Her passion for experiential learning and leadership inspires global collaboration.

Sustainability advocate and educator, **Anna** empowers students worldwide through the SEED-Lab and the Global Case Study Challenge. Fluent in several languages, she bridges cultures and drives sustainable change in education and business.

Abstract: Inclusive co-facilitation brings together diverse perspectives to create meaningful learning spaces. In this session, we explore how co-facilitators can build on each other's strengths, create psychological safety, and make participation accessible for all.

Description: Co-facilitation is more than just "two people leading a session". It's about shared preparation, presence in the moment, and reflection after the session. We'll share practical strategies for inclusive co-facilitation at every stage: how to plan together, create space for all voices during the session, and reflect as a team afterwards. We'll share concrete experiences and practical insights, discussing how to balance roles, handle dynamics in the moment, and make sure participants feel seen and heard. You'll leave with clear tools to design inclusive experiences with your co-facilitators — before, during, and after your sessions.

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17:00 to 18:30

From buzzwords to business impact: Merging CLIL, DEIB & AI for next-gen business English training, by [Reena Rana](#)

Reena Rana, MBA, MBE, TEFL, and UGC-NET (Management), is a CLIL and bilingual education expert with 15 years of teaching experience across India, Australia, and Spain. An international speaker, she has presented at TESOL Spain and published in ELT Magazine Turkey (2025).

Abstract: This hands-on workshop explores how CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging), and AI-driven tools can revolutionize Business English training. Participants will engage in micro-simulations and co-create personalized learning paths adaptable to global workplace scenarios.

Description: CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) is reshaping how we teach language across disciplines—but how can it align with DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging) values and AI-powered personalization to meet the fast-changing needs of global business? This engaging 45–60-minute workshop invites participants to reimagine Business English instruction through three innovative lenses: CLIL for contextual fluency, DEIB for equitable access, and AI for adaptive learning. We'll begin with a dynamic, fast-paced introduction to each concept, grounded in real-world examples. Participants will then rotate through three hands-on breakout simulations: one focused on designing a Business English micro-module around sustainability or marketing, another on identifying and revising biased case studies in training content, and a third exploring accessible AI tools to personalize learning. Together, we'll reflect and co-create a practical framework for inclusive, AI-enhanced CLIL programs ready to adapt to diverse educational and corporate settings.

Leveraging global competence for social innovation: Integrating a global competence framework into university curricula as a driver for social change, by [Amaia Ojer](#)

Amaia manages international education projects and trains students and academic staff in intercultural and global competence. With multiple degrees and certifications, Amaia coordinates the EU project *Global Teachers for a Sustainable Future* and is currently pursuing her PhD.

Abstract: In an interconnected world, higher education must foster global competence as a driver of social innovation. This paper explores how integrating a global competence framework into university curricula empowers students as agents of change. Using the *Global Teachers for a*

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Sustainable Future (GTSF) program as a case study, we highlight its role in developing globally competent individuals who create sustainable, inclusive solutions, embedding global competence into education for lasting impact.

Description: In an increasingly interconnected world, higher education institutions play a vital role in fostering global competence as a catalyst for social innovation. Embracing diverse perspectives, experiences, and cultural backgrounds is beneficial and essential for transformative change. By equipping students with adaptability, empathy, and intercultural communication skills, universities empower them to navigate and leverage diversity effectively. This paper advocates for integrating a global competence framework into university curricula to prepare students as proactive agents of change. As a case study, we present the Global Teachers for a Sustainable Future (GTSF) program, which cultivates globally competent individuals who develop sustainable, innovative, and inclusive solutions to social challenges. Additionally, we highlight the need for globalized learning objectives, demonstrating how the GTSF Global Competence Framework helps embed global competence into curricula. This approach ensures students engage with diverse perspectives and address real-world issues through a global lens. By fostering a global mindset, we shape the next generation of leaders committed to meaningful, lasting change.

Living the mix: How interconnectedness and global mobility are shaping and reshaping intercultural skills daily, by [Pavle Luger](#)

Pavle Luger H. is a multilingual intercultural coach and global citizen, blending curiosity, adventure, and empathy to help individuals and organizations embrace cultural complexity and thrive across borders.

Abstract: Discover how global mobility reshapes cultural identity daily. Using personal stories and the META-Skills framework, gain practical tools to build cultural agility, empathy, and adaptability in a complex, connected world.

Description: In today's connected world, our cultural identity is always growing — a rich mix of languages, experiences, and personal stories. This workshop invites you on a journey to explore your own cultural story. With the META-Skills framework: Metacognitive Awareness, Emotional Adaptability, Transcultural Flexibility, and Active Empathy, you'll learn practical ways to build cultural agility and, ultimately, become interculturally fluid. Through personal stories, visual mapping, and fun reflection activities, this interactive session offers fresh insights and real-life tools. Whether you're leading diverse teams or just curious about connecting across cultures, you'll leave inspired and ready to navigate our global world with confidence and curiosity. Let's grow these skills together!

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From gendered discourse to inclusive representation: A sociolinguistic analysis of gender equality strategies in the olympic and paralympic games, by Jingfan Zhang

Jingfan Zhang is a storyteller of words and equality a translator, intercultural strategist, and sociolinguist blending research with action. With Paris 2024 experience and a Master's in Intercultural studies, she champions inclusive voices worldwide.

Abstract: This presentation addresses gender inequality in global sports by showing how language can reinforce or resist bias, drawing on fieldwork with Paris 2024 and discourse analysis. It argues that language is a tool for justice. Attendees will explore how inclusive communication disrupts power structures and drives institutional change toward more equitable and intersectional representation.

Description: In this session, we will explore how language shapes gender equality in global sports institutions, focusing on the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Based on fieldwork with Paris 2024 and qualitative discourse analysis, the presentation reveals how institutional communication either reinforces or challenges gender bias. Participants will gain insight into inclusive language strategies, gender-aware media practices, and the performative power of discourse. The methodology combines critical sociolinguistics with an activist lens, drawing from IOC/COJOP documents and an expert interview. What makes this session innovative is its intersection of gender, language, and power—offering a fresh, field-informed perspective on how institutions can use inclusive communication as a tool for social justice and systemic transformation.

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Track C: 90-minute online workshops

15:00 to 16:30

Decolonising intercultural education, by [Daniela Felletti](#) and [Anjam Chaudhary](#)

Daniela Felletti (she/her) is a Global DEI Practitioner, Speaker & Educator. She partners with corporates & orgs (EU, UK, US, India) to decolonize DEI through neuroscience, behavior science & inclusive leadership. Italian-Brazilian, multilingual, she bridges lived experience, research & systemic change.

Dr. Anjam Chaudhary is the Director of the Global DEI Program at MSU. She leads initiatives on intercultural awareness, inclusive leadership, and global engagement. She also co-directs the Mandela Washington Fellowship and contributes to NAFSA on curriculum internationalization.

Abstract: This interactive session will offer participants a chance to explore the different ways of approaching Intercultural Education through a decolonizing lens. The presenters will share their journey in decolonizing their curriculums, integrating diverse, and impactful voices to share and understand intercultural learning. The participants will learn critical intercultural techniques to value the integration of diverse voices into their content creation. The presenters will also discuss ways to engage in a dialogue with detractors of DEI.

Description: Intercultural education has long been shaped by Western-centric frameworks, silencing non-Western knowledge and reinforcing colonial power structures. This session challenges that legacy by decolonizing intercultural learning—uncovering hidden biases and amplifying marginalized worldviews. Participants will gain practical tools to critically examine their own perspectives and reshape content creation through a decolonial lens. Using interactive exercises, discussions, and reflection, the session fosters active unlearning and co-creation of inclusive approaches. Innovatively, it goes beyond theory by integrating decolonial AI critique—addressing how technology perpetuates colonial mindsets while exploring its potential to disrupt biases. By merging participatory methods with actionable strategies, this session offers a transformative space to reimagine intercultural education with equity at its core.

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17:00 to 18:30

Gamification and storytelling: Benefits and challenges, by [George Simons](#) and [Dr. Darren Chong](#)

With 50 years of experience, Dr. George Simons is a global expert in cross-cultural communication and management, working with major companies, NGOs, and governments. He developed DIVERSOPHY® and has trained teams worldwide, focusing on intercultural collaboration and leadership.

Dr. Darren Chong has over 20 years of experience in diversity and works to champion the Asian cultural challenges in a world that is typically Western-centric.

Abstract: In this workshop your authors of "diversophy®: Gamification & Storytelling" will interactively explore the cultural and pedagogical benefits & challenges of using games & storytelling in academic & organizational teaching & training. Using both theory & practical exercises, we will identify the obstacles to interactive learning devices & personal sharing in various cultures and demonstrate how they can be successfully met both in the design & conduct of exercises when facilitating both large and small diverse participant groups.

Description: Gaming & storytelling are very much on the rise, not only in intercultural work, but in a variety of academic & training contexts as well as in social and political activities. This session will explore the benefits of using exercises that connect people with each other's stories, highlighting both differences and commonalities as opportunities for mutual understanding & social cohesion at a time when both cultural bias and populism threaten diversity and inclusion programs and efforts. We will take advantage of neuroscientific insights as to the nature of culture and human connectivity through neural mirroring. This will enable us to identify & offer solutions to the cultural challenges & behaviors that block participants from actively sharing personal perspectives & experiences across rank, gender, & generational divides. The workshop itself & the exercises used will incorporate the principles enunciated above, thus innovatively modeling what needs to be learned in the actual learning process.

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In-Person Sessions Short Version

ONSITE PROGRAM - MORNING SESSIONS

	TRACK A	TRACK B	TRACK C	TRACK D
09:00 – 10:00	Opening Session with Innovation begins with shared humanity: Reconnecting in a disconnected world interview with Dr. Darla K. Deardorff			
10:00 – 11:30	Saving DEI – a suggested pathway from war to dialogue and building co-constructed peace zones for agreement and mutual gain Workshop by Matthew Hill	Reframing DEI: Intercultural practice in a shifting landscape Workshop by Agnieszka Kotucz	1. The role of intercultural competence in the internationalisation of higher education by Andrea Martinez Celis 2. Understanding students' attitudes toward diversity by Ursula Brinkmann, Eryka Aniol 3. How to create an Intention Statement to cover DEI in 2 minutes by Vincent Stevenson	Creating meaningful conversations driven by data and rooted in science (hybrid) Workshop by Csaba Toth
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee Break			
12:00 – 13:30	Using culture as a catalyst to manage stakeholders in an innovative manner during complex organizational change Workshop by Mithun Mridha	Systemic dialogue as a powerful approach to inclusive systemic change: Explore nni methodology as a tool for group journey of deep listening, connection, change and action Dialogue by Klaudia Jaworska	1. Strategic positioning in global organizations: Developing intercultural competence for success by Monika Chutnik 2. Transcendent leadership: Reclaiming human intelligence in the age of AI by Lena Lodzinska 3. Nudging inclusive behaviours in new managers - without the backlash or DEI talk by Anna Jakielaszek	Future-Proofing Intercultural Training: Insights and Innovations from ELEVATE 60 min Workshop by Naiara Arnaez, Anna Zelno & Lina Klemkaite Numbers Stand for People: Finding Humanity in Data 30 min Presentation by Amna Ben Amara & Peter Mousaferiadis
13:30 – 14:45	Lunch Break			

ONSITE PROGRAM - AFTERNOON SESSIONS

	TRACK A	TRACK B	TRACK C (Hybrid)	TRACK D
14:45 – 15:00	Insights from Diversity Atlas: Presentations and Snapshot Analysis			
15:00 – 16:30	Cognitive and cultural diversity in stress management Workshop by Piotr Pluta	How intercultural sensitivity can support effective collaboration in neurodiverse environment Workshop by Aleksandra Ulka	1. Facilitate migrants inclusion in the Logistics industry: A business case by Maura Di Mauro 2. Lost first generation and struggling second generation: Acculturation of Chinese immigrant families in Spain by Yaoshuochen Zhang 3. Harnessing street art and graphic novels to foster inclusivity and dialogue by Grazia Ghellini	1. Conflict is diversity: How tensions can build stronger teams and deeper relationships by Manuela Pližga 2. DEI as an employer branding strategy in Germany and Spain by Alejandro Pastor Lara
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee Break			
17:00 – 18:30	Equity x AI: Designing a faculty development action plan for inclusive, future-ready teaching Workshop by Shradha Tibrewal & Betsy Eudey	To be confirmed	1. Common values, uncommon times, the case of WroOpenUp: A safe space for openness by Aneta Długopolska & Oliwia Tarasewicz 2. Enabling social and community innovation in place by Lina Klemkaite 3. Systemic dialogue as a powerful approach to inclusive systemic change: nni methodology by Klaudia Jaworska	Gamification & storytelling: Benefits & challenges (hybrid) by George Simons & Dr. Darren Chong
18:30 – ...	Closing Celebration			

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In-Person Event – 31 May in Wrocław

Opening Session

09:00 to 10:00

Innovation begins with shared humanity: Reconnecting in a disconnected world by [Dr. Darla K. Deardorff](#)

Dr. Darla K. Deardorff is a leading expert in international education and global leadership. She serves as Executive Director of the Association of International Education Administrators, holds the UNESCO Chair of Intercultural Competence at Stellenbosch University, and is a research fellow at Duke University. She is also the founding president of the World Council on Intercultural and Global Competence.

Abstract: In this opening conversation, Anna Zelno interviews Prof. Darla Deardorff on how recognizing our shared humanity can unlock innovation in diverse teams and communities. Together, they explore how empathy, storytelling, and meaningful connection can transform how we work, lead, and create in a fragmented world.

Description: What if the key to innovation isn't just new ideas—but deeper human connection? In this powerful opening dialogue, Anna Zelno interviews Prof. Darla Deardorff, renowned expert in global education and dialogue, to explore how recognizing our shared humanity can fuel inclusive innovation. Drawing on years of work across cultures, sectors, and communities, Prof. Deardorff shares insights on the power of empathy, listening, and storytelling in shaping environments where everyone can contribute their full potential. Together, they invite us to reimagine collaboration not just as a strategy, but as a human practice—one that begins with connection and leads to transformation.

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Track A: 90-minute parallel workshops

10:00 to 11:30

Saving DEI: A suggested pathway from war to dialogue and building co-constructed peace zones for agreement and mutual gain, by Matthew Hill

With qualifications in Psychology, NLP, Intercultural Studies, Conflict Mediation, Communication and Intercultural training, Matthew has worked in 30 countries. His training content includes: Raising cultural awareness, Learning how to debate, Handling difficult people and conversations, Presentation skills. He has written 10 books including, Learn How to LEAD; Believe, Behave & Become.

Abstract: Gaza, Ukraine, Trump, Immigration, etc. We witness the shouting, and the hate from both sides, and we see an absence of constructive engagement, mutual problem solving, or the sustainable generation of workable outcomes. In this interactive workshop we will borrow from the fields of Intercultural practice, and mediation best practices, to experiment with models, techniques, and philosophies to see if we can bring back debate, discussion and solution finding.

Description: We will learn and practice some proven debate and discussion methods in the Socratic and Mediation tradition to restart debate with the “other”. Learning outcomes: Mobilising people from different backgrounds to work together to tackle challenging topics and to do so without escalation, failure, or extremism. We will practice: Disconfirmation, Confront to Probe, Have you ever changed your mind?, Move them from Certainty to Doubt, Tell the Story 3 Ways, Belief Reversers. We aim to re-introduce robust and healthy debate back into society, for the good of society.

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12:00 to 13:30

Using culture as a catalyst to manage stakeholders (in an innovative manner during transformation / complex organizational change), by [Mithun Mridha](#)

Mithun Mridha is an Organizational Transformation expert and Enterprise Agile Coach at Capgemini Paris. An international speaker and intercultural enthusiast, he supports executives in driving complex organizational change and teaches at top European business schools.

Abstract: Mastering stakeholder management is key to transformation success. In a global context, diverse expectations and intercultural dynamics add complexity. This practical session equips Leaders and Change Managers with tools to navigate power dynamics, secure buy-in, and turn stakeholders into champions. Intercultural management, often overlooked, is a strategic capability—not just a soft skill—that critically impacts transformation outcomes.

Description: Change is constant, but success in transformation depends on how we navigate it—and culture, often underestimated, is a critical factor. In today's global landscape, cultural intelligence (CQ) is no longer optional; it's a strategic necessity. This interactive, practice-oriented session equips participants with actionable tools to decode both intercultural and organizational dynamics, build trust, and engage stakeholders more effectively. You'll explore how to align culture with project goals, manage diverse stakeholder groups, and transform resistance into support. What sets this session apart is its innovative focus: rather than treating culture as an obstacle, it places intercultural dynamics at the heart of stakeholder strategy—turning culture into a powerful catalyst for change. Participants will leave with hands-on experience in cultural diagnostics and power mapping, and a stronger capacity to lead through complexity by leveraging organizational culture for influence and buy-in.

15:00 to 16:30

Cognitive and cultural diversity in stress management, by [Piotr Pluta](#)

Piotr Pluta is an organizational psychologist at Human Factors, delivering workshops on teamwork, communication, and diversity. Fluent in four languages, he also works as a music therapist in Oslo and researches training tools and the role of humor.

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Abstract: How can we move beyond generic stress management to approaches that embrace human diversity? This workshop explores stress, cognitive diversity, and inclusion through the Diversity Icebreaker® method. Participants will discover their thinking and communication styles, learn how different profiles manage stress, and explore inclusive coping strategies at individual, team, and organizational levels—ideal for practitioners seeking practical, evidence-based tools.

Description: This interactive session explores how stress is experienced and expressed across different cognitive and cultural profiles. Using a compact version of the Diversity Icebreaker®, participants will identify their own thinking and communication styles and learn how diverse profiles respond to stress. Through practical scenarios, they will apply inclusive strategies that foster psychological safety and resilience at individual and team levels. The session blends validated methodology with intercultural insights, promoting reflection and experimentation. It moves beyond individual coping to address team-level stress dynamics and highlights how diversity, when embraced, can become a key asset in managing stress—not a barrier. Designed for practitioners, the session offers actionable tools to build healthier, more adaptive teams and unlock the positive potential of cognitive and cultural differences.

17:00 to 18:30

Equity x AI: Designing a Faculty Development Action Plan for inclusive, future-ready teaching, by [Shradha Tibrewal](#) and [Betsy Eudey](#)

Shradha Tibrewal is a faculty member in the MSW Program at Stan State. Her work centers on social justice, child welfare, gender equity, and mindfulness. She leads inclusive teaching efforts and supports equity-minded, compassionate education.

Betsy Eudey is a professor of Gender Studies and COIL Coordinator at CSU Stanislaus. She is the Founding Director of the Center for Women's Studies and Programs. With expertise in a wide range of courses, including Introduction to Women's Studies, Race, Class & Gender, US Women's Movements, Feminist Theory and Methods, Women's Education, African American Women's Lives, Women in Popular Culture, and Ethics, Betsy is dedicated to advancing education and research in gender studies.

Abstract: This hands-on workshop guides participants in building a faculty development action plan that innovatively integrates equity-minded, culturally-responsive pedagogy with AI-assisted instructional design. Using scenario prompts, visioning tools, and a customizable planning template, participants will leave with concrete strategies for inclusive, future-ready teaching practices tailored

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to their campus context. Plans can be for individuals, faculty groups/departments, or full campuses/consortiums.

Description: This workshop bridges two of the most pressing conversations in higher education today: AI innovation and equity. Participants will engage in hands-on planning to develop a faculty development action plan that blends culturally inclusive pedagogy with AI-assisted instructional design. Through institutional reflection, scenario-based problem-solving, and guided use of a customizable Equity x AI planning template, participants will draft a clear vision, define both short- and long-term goals, and identify key stakeholders to drive implementation. A curated resource list will support continued development beyond the session. What makes this workshop unique is its integrative Equity x AI framework, combining design thinking with cultural relevance and scalable strategies for sustainable, inclusive teaching innovation. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped to explore the intersection of equity and AI, apply practical tools, and develop actionable, future-ready strategies to enhance learning across diverse campus contexts.

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Track B: 90-minute parallel workshops

10:00 to 11:30

Reframing DEI: Intercultural practice in a shifting landscape, by [Agnieszka Kotucz](#)

Agnieszka is a trainer and facilitator. She is co-founder of DCONCEPT and long time member of SIETAR Polska. She delivers her development programs for global companies. Her fields of interest are: leader's role, cooperation in multicultural teams & group work facilitation.

Abstract: As resistance to DEI grows, intercultural professionals face a critical challenge: how to continue this work when we can't always name it. This interactive session focuses on developing effective, context-sensitive communication strategies that allow us to sustain the goals of DEI, even when the terminology itself becomes politically or culturally sensitive. Together, we'll explore the shifting landscape, share current experiences from the field, and practice navigating constructive conversations with stakeholders. The session offers a reflection to rethink and design how we can speak about diversity in today's complex environment.

Description: As resistance to DEI grows, intercultural professionals face a critical challenge: how to continue advancing this work when we can't always name it directly. This interactive session is designed to develop effective, context-sensitive communication strategies that allow us to sustain the core goals of DEI, even when the terminology itself becomes politically or culturally sensitive. Together, we will explore the shifting social and organizational landscape, share real-world experiences from the field, and practice navigating difficult conversations with a variety of stakeholders. Through scenario-based work and peer exchange, we will co-create a practical toolkit of alternative framings—such as inclusive leadership, belonging, or psychological safety—that align with organizational values while minimizing resistance. This session offers a reflective and hands-on space to reimagine how we speak about difference, equity, and inclusion, ensuring that our work remains impactful, even in increasingly complex and constrained environments.

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12:00 to 13:30

Systemic dialogue as a powerful approach to inclusive systemic change: Explore nni methodology as a tool for group journey of deep listening, connection, change and action, by [Klaudia Jaworska](#)

Klaudia Jaworska is a leadership coach, facilitator, and DEI consultant. She has a coaching diploma from Co-Active Training Institute (CTI). She has trained with the nniDialogue Institute in systemic dialogue facilitation and systems coaching and holds a DEI diploma from Cornell University.

Abstract: Nni's transformative systemic dialogue is a process that facilitates communication among diverse groups and stakeholders, creating a platform for all voices in a system to be heard, including marginalized ones. The process enables working with diversity and differences without conflict resolution strategies, instead fostering common ground. It enhances participants' understanding of different perspectives and access to the system's deeper wisdom. As a result, the group is empowered to take responsibility and accountability for change.

Description: During the dialogue process, participants are guided through stages of deep listening and three levels of communication, allowing them to develop a deeper connection and understanding of the topic. As a result, they uncover new, often hidden perspectives. Learning outcomes: Enabling new voices and perspectives within the system, building capacity to navigate the unknown, breaking down barriers, unblocking group potential, fostering alignment among diverse stakeholders, and empowering individuals to co-create solutions and lasting change. Methodology: nni's DI methodology draws from large-group processes and models, including Deep Democracy, Worldwork and Process Psychology (Mindell), Co-Active Coaching (CTI), The World Café (Brown), and change theory—Theory U (Scharmer). Innovative aspects: Experiential nature of the process, ability to create psychological safety through systemic voices, enabling participants to express themselves on behalf of the system and process difficult experiences safely; it also adapts flexibly to various topics.

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15:00 to 16:30

How intercultural sensitivity can support effective collaboration in neurodiverse environment, by [Aleksandra Ulka](#)

Passionate about people and culture, guiding individuals and organizations through complex change. 16+ years in global HR, IT & DEI projects. Former SIETAR Polska president (2019–2021). Neurodivergent on a mission to make the world more neuroinclusive.

Abstract: Intercultural sensitivity can be one of the key contributors to neuroinclusion by fostering an environment where diverse cognitive and cultural perspectives are respected and valued. It promotes understanding and empathy toward different ways of thinking and behaving, which is crucial for supporting neurodivergent individuals. By recognizing differences in communication styles, learning preferences, and problem-solving approaches, intercultural sensitivity helps create more inclusive and supportive environments for everyone, regardless of individual profiles.

Description: This session explores the intersection of intercultural sensitivity and neuroinclusion, focusing on how understanding cultural and cognitive differences can foster more inclusive environments for neurodivergent individuals. We will examine the impact of cultural perspectives on communication, learning, and problem-solving, and explore actionable strategies to create supportive, inclusive workplaces. Participants will gain practical tools for promoting neuroinclusion, understand how intercultural sensitivity enhances empathy, and learn to identify and respect diverse communication styles. They will also acquire strategies for fostering inclusive environments that cater to varying cognitive and cultural needs. The session will be interactive, combining case studies, group discussions, and break-out group activities to engage participants. Through these methods, attendees will gain a better understanding in applying intercultural sensitivity to real-world neuroinclusion challenges. This session is innovative because it bridges intercultural communication and neuroinclusion, two often siloed fields, offering a fresh approach to creating truly inclusive workplaces. It emphasizes practical, actionable strategies that integrate cultural awareness with neurodivergent support.

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Track C: 20-minute presentations

10:00 to 11:30

The role of intercultural competence in the internationalisation of higher education, by [Andrea Martínez Celis](#)

Dr. Andrea Martínez Celis is an assistant professor and an intercultural competence trainer. She researches on intercultural communication and internationalization, and collaborated with the UN, promoting intercultural competence to achieve the SDGs.

Abstract: An investigation on the administrative and support staff of two European institutions regarding internationalisation and their own perceived intercultural competence within their contexts will be presented. Further, a proposed interdisciplinary method to evaluate intercultural competence from an emic perspective—through questionnaires and interviews—and from an etic perspective—analysing participants' discursive constructions to reveal their values and intercultural competence will be discussed.

Description: This presentation will explore the perceptions of the administrative and support staff at two universities (one in Spain, the other in the Netherlands) regarding internationalisation in their institutions and their own perceived intercultural competence within their contexts. Using the Schwartz value system, the presenter aims also to understand and explore how human values relate to attitudes and intercultural competence more broadly. The importance of intercultural competence of administrative and support staff in internationalised universities will be discussed, as well as their key role as essential agents in promoting internationalisation. The researcher proposes an interdisciplinary method to evaluate intercultural competence from an emic perspective—through questionnaires and interviews—and from an etic perspective—analysing participants' discursive constructions to reveal their human values. This presentation will be of interest to academics and practitioners in fields such as intercultural competence, intercultural and cross-cultural studies, internationalisation of higher education, linguistics, and sociology.

Understanding students' attitudes toward diversity, by [Ursula Brinkmann](#) & [Eryka Aniol](#)

Ursula co-developed the Intercultural Readiness Check and wrote Intercultural Readiness (Palgrave) with Oscar van Weerdenburg. She was president of SIETAR Netherlands, won SIETAR USA's

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Margaret D Pusch Founders Award, and is engaged in the Erasmus+ European Certificate for Intercultural Learning.

Eryka is a psychology graduate with an MSc in Cultural Psychology and a trainee at SIETAR Poland, focusing on intercultural psychology and diversity research. She is currently based in Aarhus, Denmark.

Abstract: In recent years, awareness of diversity and inclusion has grown. But what do we know about students' attitudes towards diversity? How have these attitudes been shaped by increased attention to societal change and intercultural competence? Using data from 12,000+ students collected by IBI via the Intercultural Readiness Check (IRC), we examined students' trends in diversity attitudes and their correlation with international experiences and demographic factors.

Description: Our study explores how students' intercultural competencies, demographics and international experiences shape their attitudes towards diversity, using data from over 12,000 students collected via the Intercultural Readiness Check (IRC) and Homan's Diversity Beliefs Scale. Participants will gain insights into key predictors of positive diversity attitudes, find correlations between intercultural competencies and diversity beliefs, and explore how factors like gender and age influence openness to diversity. Our session will begin with a 7-minute presentation of key findings / methodology, followed by 5 minutes of small-group discussion where participants will reflect on how these insights align with experiences at their own institutions. A 5-minute group debrief will allow for sharing of practices such as Diversity Days, workshops or intercultural training, sharing effective or failed strategies. The final 3 minutes will be used for a summary and Q&A.

How to create an *Intention Statement* to cover diversity, inclusion, and equity in 2 minutes, by [Vincent Stevenson](#)

I have been a speaker and trainer for many years, working in IT and personal development across the UK, Europe, and the Middle East. I am a member of the Trainers' Forum, whose ethos is strongly bound to Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity.

Abstract: The ethos of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are now woven into the fabric of progressive organisations. But how does that relate to the classroom? How do we make every student feel welcomed, valued, and supported? The trainer's role is to create the atmosphere in class, and in this session, students will learn how easy it is to raise the DEI issue and form a consensus within one minute. An intention Statement is an informal acceptance of shared human values.

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Description: This session is about creating a binding contract among the class students that supports Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. I call it an Intention Statement. The intention is to create a classroom environment where students from different cultures, creeds, colours, and genders work together and allow their differences to be accepted and respected. This enables students from minority groups to feel welcomed, accepted, and supported. Everybody's contribution must be seen, heard and valued in creative environments. There will be a short presentation and classroom discussion. In October 2024, I attended training events in London and Barcelona and participated in many sessions. Despite a diverse audience, not one session raised the issue of DEI in the classroom. I raise it daily in my training practice.

12:00 to 13:30

Strategic positioning in global organizations: Developing intercultural competence for success, by [Monika Chutnik](#)

Monika Chutnik, Head Consultant at ETTA. Go Global, helps organizations foster human-centered management, boosting productivity, psychological safety, and collaboration in global teams. Applies innovative learning approaches to help clients grow.

Abstract: The presentation will refer to our business experience at ETTA. Go Global, working with organizations to tackle challenges faced by leaders in global settings. I will focus on how local leaders can enhance their influence within international organizations through intercultural awareness. Thanks to the presented real-life examples and innovative development approaches, participants will gain valuable insights into supporting leadership teams in making an impact across cultures.

Description: This session will explore the challenges local leaders face when striving to influence global organizations and how development actions can address these barriers. Drawing from ETTA. Go Global's experience, I will share insights on overcoming intercultural communication challenges and boosting leadership impact. Participants will learn innovative strategies to develop intercultural competence and increase leadership effectiveness in global contexts. The session will feature a 20-minute presentation with real-life examples and cutting-edge development approaches not yet mainstream in organizational development.

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Transcendent leadership: Reclaiming human intelligence in the age of AI, by [Lena Lodzinska](#)

Lena is a leadership coach and corporate trainer with 10+ years of global experience. She empowers leaders and teams through transformational coaching and training. Based in Barcelona, she works in 4 languages and blends insight, empathy, and humor.

Abstract: Discover Transcendent Leadership - a powerful framework integrating IQ, EQ, and TQ (Transcendental Intelligence) - to lead inclusively in the AI era. This talk offers fresh insights for DEI changemakers ready to move beyond compliance, embody purpose, and foster human-centered innovation. Learn how to lead with clarity, compassion, and soul in an age of accelerating complexity.

Description: In a world shaped by AI, the need for deeply human leadership is more urgent than ever. While AI can replicate IQ and simulate EQ, it cannot access what Rumi called the “fountainhead within” - our innate wisdom, compassion, and inner knowing. This is the realm of Transcendental Intelligence (TQ), a vital and emerging dimension of inclusive leadership. This session introduces Transcendent Leadership, an emerging model that integrates IQ (cognitive), EQ (emotional), and TQ (transcendental) intelligence to drive innovation, inclusion, and meaningful transformation. Drawing from DEI, neuroscience, intercultural practice, and consciousness studies, we’ll explore how leaders can embody presence, clarity, and soul in complex, tech-driven systems. Participants will gain practical insights on how to lead transformation beyond compliance, reframe inclusion as a felt and embodied experience, and co-evolve with AI while staying grounded in purpose, humanity, and justice.

Nudging inclusive behaviours: Practical strategies for new managers, by [Anna Jakielaszek](#)

Anna is a leadership trainer and coach with experience across the tech and medical sectors, combining an HR background with a behavioural approach to leadership development. She equips new managers with tools to build confidence, lead diverse teams, and develop inclusive behaviours—without the backlash often linked to traditional DEI training. Her approach is grounded in real-life application, behavioural science, and practical tools.

Abstract: This session explores how to embed inclusive behaviours in first-time managers—without “preaching” DEI. Drawing on Anna’s experience in global organisations and local start-ups, the session focuses on small nudges and behavioural insights that align with what managers actually need to succeed. Participants will leave with practical strategies to support inclusive leadership without triggering resistance.

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Description: This session will explore how to foster inclusive behaviours in new managers without explicitly focusing on DEI. Drawing from practical experience in training and coaching, Anna will demonstrate how responding to first-time managers' concerns, mindset, and needs can lead to more inclusive leadership—without relying on traditional diversity messaging. This session shows how inclusive behaviours can be developed by starting with managers' goals, challenges, and leadership identity. Inspired by design thinking, we begin by understanding their reality: concerns, ambitions, and needs. Helping them uncover their own thinking patterns and motivations often sparks the a-ha moments that shift how they relate to others. Inclusion becomes not a mandate but a natural and necessary way to lead effectively. Through case examples, interactive elements, and a focus on what works in practice, participants will learn to influence inclusion through leadership behaviours, making inclusion a natural outcome of good leadership. Drawing on work with managers in the tech and healthcare sectors, the session shares field-tested exercises, coaching moments, and case stories that led to visible behavioural shifts—without ever needing to talk about DEI directly. It's practical, respectful of context, and rooted in real outcomes.

15:00 to 16:30

Facilitate migrants inclusion in the logistics industry: A business case, by Maura Di Mauro

Intercultural & DEI Consultant. One of the CoE Intercultural City Network Consultants. GDIEB and ISO 30:415 Assessor. Lecturer of Intercultural Management at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. SIETAR Italia President from 2016 to 2019.

Abstract: During this session, Maura will share with the audience why the logistics company approached her and what their requests were at that time. She will present what she proposed and developed in order to avoid an emergency approach, and embrace a more systemic and sustainable approach to foster a process of co-building an intercultural organizational culture. An intercultural training program for team leaders was just the beginning, together with communication and skills evaluation practices.

Description: The Arena session will begin with a short introduction presenting the case of a logistics company that sought support in managing challenges related to a multicultural workforce. Their initial request was shaped by urgent needs, but the proposed intervention aimed to avoid an emergency approach and embrace a more systemic and sustainable approach to foster a process of co-building an intercultural organizational culture. An intercultural training program for team leaders was just the beginning, together with communication and skills evaluation practices. The rest of the

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session will be fully dedicated to answering meaningful questions from the audience, encouraging dialogue around practical strategies for inclusive workforce management.

Lost first generation and struggling second generation: Acculturation of Chinese immigrant families in Spain, by [Yaoshuochen Zhang](#)

Yaoshuochen Zhang is a PhD candidate at the University of Barcelona. His research focuses on the intergenerational acculturation gap in Chinese immigrant families in Spain and its effects on youth identity, well-being, and cultural integration.

Abstract: This session explores intergenerational acculturation in Chinese immigrant families in Spain and its effects on youth identity and well-being. Participants will gain insights into family-based cultural tensions and learn how to apply this knowledge in educational, social, and policy contexts.

Description: This session explores the acculturation gap between first- and second-generation Chinese immigrants in Spain, focusing on how identity, well-being, and family dynamics are shaped by unequal integration experiences. Based on recent fieldwork, the research highlights the challenges faced by first-generation immigrants—many of whom arrived with limited education, little knowledge of Mandarin or Spanish, and remained socially and culturally isolated. Described as a “lost generation,” their unresolved adaptation difficulties are often transmitted to their children through rigid family expectations, cultural dissonance, and intergenerational misunderstanding. Participants will gain insight into the emotional burden carried by second-generation youth navigating between inherited traditional values and the norms of the host society. The session will also address research challenges such as building trust in a hard-to-reach community and designing culturally sensitive tools for fieldwork. The 20-minute session will follow a clear structure: a brief introduction, two real-life case narratives, and an audience reflection moment with guiding questions. Findings will be made actionable through concrete recommendations for educators and practitioners working with immigrant communities. This session is distinctive in its insider-driven perspective, focusing on a rarely discussed immigrant group in Europe, and use of intersectionality and n-culturality to avoid essentialist cultural narratives. It contributes both to academic dialogue and to more inclusive, family-aware intercultural policies.

Harnessing street art and graphic novels to foster inclusivity and dialogue, by [Grazia Ghellini](#)

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Grazia Ghellini, Ph.D., is President of SIETAR France and teaches intercultural communication, negotiation, business ethics, and global management at universities and business schools in France and internationally.

Abstract: This presentation explores the practical applications of street art and graphic novels as tools for raising awareness about migration and fostering empathy and inclusive dialogue. By examining successful projects that utilize these mediums, we will highlight innovative approaches to address societal polarization and promote understanding. Attendees will discover actionable strategies that engage diverse communities, encourage empathy, and inspire art based initiatives focused on migration narratives.

Description: In today's polarized society, addressing migration through engaging and relatable formats is essential. This presentation will provide an overview of practical applications of street art and graphic novels in promoting awareness and inclusivity around migration issues.

Participants will learn about effective strategies for implementing street art and graphic novels in community outreach programs. We will delve into the methodology used in successful initiatives, providing a framework that attendees can adapt to their local contexts.

Key learning outcomes include:

- Understanding how visual storytelling can challenge stereotypes and facilitate respectful dialogue.
- Identifying practical steps for initiating similar projects focused on migration and inclusion.

Innovatively, this presentation emphasizes actionable takeaways for fostering a collaborative environment for tackling migration narratives. Attendees will leave with the tools and inspiration needed to implement similar initiatives in their communities, contributing to a more empathetic and inclusive dialogue around migration.

17:00 to 18:30

Systemic dialogue as a powerful approach to inclusive systemic change: Explore nni methodology as a tool for group journey of deep listening, connection, change and action, by [Klaudia Jaworska](#)

Klaudia Jaworska is a leadership coach, facilitator, and DEI consultant. Has a coaching diploma from Co-Active Training Institute (CTI). She has trained with the nniDialogue Institute in systemic dialogue facilitation and systems coaching and holds a DEI diploma from Cornell University.

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Abstract: Nni's transformative systemic dialogue is a process that facilitates communication among diverse groups and stakeholders, creating a platform for all voices in a system to be heard, including marginalized ones. The process enables working with diversity and differences without conflict resolution strategies, instead fostering common ground. It enhances participants' understanding of different perspectives and access to the system's deeper wisdom. As a result, the group is empowered to take responsibility and accountability for change.

Description: During the dialogue process, participants are guided through stages of deep listening and three levels of communication, allowing them to develop a deeper connection and understanding of the topic. As a result, they uncover new, often hidden perspectives. Learning outcomes: Enabling new voices and perspectives within the system, building capacity to navigate the unknown, breaking down barriers, unblocking group potential, fostering alignment among diverse stakeholders, and empowering individuals to co-create solutions and lasting change. Methodology: nni's DI methodology draws from large-group processes and models, including Deep Democracy, Worldwork and Process Psychology (Mindell), Co-Active Coaching (CTI), The World Café (Brown), and change theory—Theory U (Scharmer). Innovative aspects: Experiential nature of the process, ability to create psychological safety through systemic voices, enabling participants to express themselves on behalf of the system and process difficult experiences safely; it also adapts flexibly to various topics.

Enabling social and community innovation in place, by [Lina Klemkaite](#)

With a background in sociology and a passion for community-led change, Lina Klemkaite has spent 15+ years building partnerships across Europe that matter. President of the Social Innovation Cluster of Castilla La Mancha and co-organizer of TEDxAlbacete, she is committed to build a new kind of innovation—rooted in place and shaped by people.

Abstract: How can we root innovation in local realities while driving wider transformation? This session presents a Social Innovation Cluster of Castilla La Mancha (SIC CLM) uniting public, academic and civic actors. We will explore how clusters foster collaboration, amplify community voices and scale inclusive solutions. Sharing our tools and lessons, we will make the case for clusters as powerful ecosystems for place-based, people-driven innovation.

Description: This session explores how cluster-based ecosystems can drive place-based social innovation. Using the case of SIC CLM, we'll show how collaboration between public institutions, academia, civil society and social entrepreneurs can generate inclusive, future-oriented solutions. Participants will gain practical insights into designing regional innovation ecosystems, stakeholder mapping tools and governance models. Through visual storytelling and dialogue, we'll explore how

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SIC CLM reframes clusters, drawing on Porter (1998), Moulaert et al. (2013), and OECD (2020), as inclusive, evolving ecosystems rooted in co-creation.

Common values, uncommon times: WrOpenUp, a safe space for openness, by [Aneta Długopolska](#) and [Oliwia Tarasewicz](#)

Aneta Długopolska and Oliwia Tarasewicz are co-founders and board members of the WrOpenUp. Aneta has worked across various industries in the corporate sector, while Oliwia is an academic lecturer. Both specialize in leadership development and communication.

Abstract: WrOpenUp is a case study in how genuine, value-driven collaboration of diverse volunteers creates resilient, diverse organizations. Participants will explore how non-activist, curiosity-driven and experiential education withstands political shifts, builds trust and empowers youth with skills for the future.

Description: This session presents the case of WrOpenUp, an NGO from Wrocław, Poland, co-created by volunteers from nearly 40 countries. Rooted in shared values—openness, respect, responsibility—it offers a practical, consistent education indifferent to politically driven narrations. WrOpenUp thrives by focusing on common human values and shared goals. Participants will learn how WrOpenUp created an inclusive, psychologically safe space for co-creation, reflect on how to frame education for inclusion in a way that transcends political narratives, and gain inspiration and practical insights for sustaining inclusive initiatives amid social and political backlash. The session uses storytelling, real-life testimonies, and interactive reflection. Participants will hear directly from WrOpenUp volunteers on what sustained their engagement across lines of nationality, age, profession, and political view. WrOpenUp is not built on mandates or labels. It never had to change its message—because it was never preaching. Instead, it listened with curiosity, empowered co-creation, and stayed rooted in universal values. In today's polarized climate, this makes WrOpenUp not only relevant, but a model for sustainable, authentic inclusion.

More about WrOpenUp [here](#)

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Track D: Workshop & Presentations (online / onsite)

12:00 to 13:30

Future-proofing intercultural training: Insights and innovations from ELEVATE, by [Naiara Arnaez](#), [Anna Zelno](#) and [Lina Klemkaite](#)

Naiara, PhD in Advanced Management, leads International Relations at Mondragon University. Her expertise includes strategic management, intercultural HR, and global talent development, bridging research and practice in inclusive leadership.

Anna is the CEO of Intercultures España & LATAM and co-founder of the Academy for Diversity & Innovation. An expert in intercultural competence and DEIB strategies, she brings over 20 years of international experience. She is also a co-founder of SIETAR Polska and a member of its Audit Committee.

Lina has spent over 15 years building meaningful partnerships across Europe. She is President of the SIC CM and co-organizer of TEDxAlbacete. An expert in Erasmus+ projects and co-author of the ELEVATE project, an ambitious multidisciplinary initiative aiming to bring change to the field of intercultural training.

Abstract: ELEVATE is a European project aiming to improve intercultural competence training. It combines research and practical tools - like a Self-Assessment Tool for Organisations and AI-assisted learning app, to help organisations become more inclusive. By connecting academia and practitioners, ELEVATE promotes sustainable learning, supports diverse workplaces, and enhances the quality of intercultural training across Europe.

Description: In this interactive workshop, participants will engage with all major milestones of the ELEVATE Erasmus+ project, involving partners from Spain, France, Germany, Poland, and Luxembourg. A key focus will be the exploration of the draft version of the Self-Assessment Tool for Intercultural Competence in Organisations, designed to support more inclusive and culturally responsive workplaces. ELEVATE Team will present findings from their research on intercultural competence in organisations and share key strategies from our communication and dissemination efforts. Additionally, the session will include a collaborative invitation to co-create sustainable intercultural training modules, enriched by insights from our World Café discussion on *"Future-Proofing Intercultural Training: New Approaches and Challenges."*

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Numbers Stand for People: Finding Humanity in Data by [Amna Ben Amara](#) and [Peter Mousaferiadis](#)

Amna is a researcher and consultant in intercultural management. She holds two master's degrees in Intercultural Management (Slovenia) and Cultural Studies (Tunisia) and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at the University of Tours, France.

Known globally as a *traveller*, Peter moves where cultures meet. From creative production to edutech and intercultural advocacy, he explores confluence - where diverse perspectives create new meaning. Passionate about unity, wisdom and collective growth. CEO of Cultural Infusion.

Abstract: Cultural diversity data is a highly complex and multi-layered concept that is not easily quantified and graspable. While diversity metrics are essential in telling us who, where, what, and when, making data “seen” and “felt” through a more “humane” lens is the real challenge. This is what Giorgia Lupi calls the “humanization of data” or Data Humanism which encourages us to see numbers as people and not vice versa!

Description: This presentation will highlight the revolutionary role of Diversity Atlas, as a creative tool designed to transform how we understand cultures and people, in going beyond traditional diversity metrics by ensuring that every individual is seen, valued, and equally recognized. Its holistic approach of combining rigorous data collection with storytelling does not only empower organizations to cultivate empathy and create inclusive environments where all voices are heard but also makes them more aware of who they are. Through the lens of Diversity Atlas, participants will explore how data can be used not just as a tool to classify, identify, and measure but also as the raw material to empower and humanize organizations. By the end of this session, participants will be invited to (re)consider the use of data in influencing and even shaping diversity initiatives. They will gain a deeper understanding of the role of data in moving beyond representation toward belonging and empowerment.

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14:45 to 15:00

Insights from Diversity Atlas: Presentations and Snapshot Analysis by Anna Zelno

As part of the conference experience, participants will be invited to take part in the Diversity Atlas questionnaire.

Diversity Atlas, developed by Cultural Infusion, is the world's **first holistic cultural data analytics platform**. It captures the rich, multidimensional diversity of individuals across seven key pillars, including language, ethnicity and cultural heritage, religion/worldview, demographic attributes, mutuality, and lived experiences. The platform is based on a self-identification questionnaire, which allows people to describe themselves in their own terms, rather than being placed into predefined categories. This activity serves **two main objectives**:

1. **To understand our own Conference Community:**

By collecting anonymized data from participants, we will generate a real-time snapshot of the cultural diversity present among us. This will offer valuable insights into representation, inclusion, and mutual understanding within our group.

2. **To familiarize participants with an innovative tool:**

By experiencing Diversity Atlas firsthand, you will learn how this tool maps diversity and measures perceptions of inclusion. This is especially valuable for consultants, educators, and change-makers who wish to use it in their own work to drive inclusive strategies and create more equitable environments.

What makes Diversity Atlas unique is its use of a self-identification approach.

This means each person is invited to define their identity as they experience it, whether that's in terms of heritage, language, belief, gender, or migration history. This empowers individuals, respects complexity, and uncovers hidden dimensions of diversity that traditional data collection often overlooks.

Participation is completely voluntary and anonymous.

You are free to choose whether or not to take part, and how much you want to share. All responses are confidential and only used in aggregate form. We believe that using Diversity Atlas will not only enrich our understanding of who we are as a community, but also provide a valuable learning experience, demonstrating how data can support more inclusive practices in your professional and organizational contexts.

Results will be presented during on-line and in-person sessions on 31st May at 14:45 CET

A special webinar will be organized prior to the conference. The date will be confirmed shortly.

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15:00 to 16:30

Conflict is diversity: How tensions can build stronger teams and deeper relationships, by [Manuela Pliżga LLB](#)

Manuela is a mediator, trainer and mentor with 20+ years of experience. She specializes in conflict resolution, communication and relationship-building, supporting teams and leaders in vision, team and life management, crisis navigation & growth.

Abstract: What if conflict wasn't a problem, but a sign of diversity? In this session you'll learn how to reframe intercultural and intergenerational tensions as opportunities for growth, innovation and stronger relationships. Discover practical tools and real-life cases that show how conflict can become a catalyst for building inclusive, resilient teams and meaningful transformation.

Description: This session reframes conflict as a powerful expression of diversity rather than a threat. We'll explore how intercultural and intergenerational tensions can spark innovation, deepen trust and strengthen teams. Participants will gain tools to transform conflict into connection, learn a simple framework for conflict-resilient teams, and analyze real case studies. The session is interactive, using reflection, dialogue and questions. Its innovation lies in shifting the narrative—seeing conflict as a starting point for belonging and growth, not breakdown.

DEI as an employer branding strategy in Germany and Spain, by [Alejandro Pastor Lara](#)

Alejandro helps companies build inclusive workplaces and navigate cultural diversity through expert training and strategic guidance. As a Diversity & Intercultural Consultant and University Lecturer, he offers tailored solutions in diversity, intercultural competence, and inclusive leadership.

Abstract: This session explores how diversity enhances employer branding. Are they friends or foes? Through a comparison from German and Spanish companies, participants will gain insights into the different strategies and the impact of inclusive workplaces on talent attraction and retention. Finally some practical steps to implement diversity-driven branding will be pointed out. Ideal for HR leaders and decision-makers, this session offers actionable takeaways to strengthen employer reputation and competitiveness in a diverse job market.

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Description: The session invites participants to reflect on how national context and organizational culture influence diversity strategies in employer branding. Using a cross-country lens, it will uncover common challenges and unique opportunities faced by companies in embedding inclusion into their brand identity. Participants will be encouraged to share their own experiences and critically examine how diversity narratives are shaped and communicated to potential employees. The session aims to foster peer learning and practical insight exchange, equipping attendees with a deeper understanding of how to position diversity as a long-term value driver in branding, not just a trend or compliance measure.

17:00 to 18:30

Gamification and storytelling: Benefits and challenges, by [George Simons](#) and [Dr. Darren Chong](#)

With 50 years of experience, Dr. George Simons is a global expert in cross-cultural communication and management, working with major companies, NGOs, and governments. He developed DIVERSOPHY® and has trained teams worldwide, focusing on intercultural collaboration and leadership.

Dr. Darren Chong has over 20 years of experience in diversity and works to champion Asian cultural challenges in a world that is typically Western-centric.

Abstract: In this workshop your authors of "diversophy®: Gamification & Storytelling" will interactively explore the cultural and pedagogical benefits & challenges of using games & storytelling in academic & organizational teaching & training. Using both theory & practical exercises, we will identify the obstacles to interactive learning devices & personal sharing in various cultures and demonstrate how they can be successfully met both in the design & conduct of exercises when facilitating both large and small diverse participant groups.

Description: Gaming & storytelling are very much on the rise, not only in intercultural work, but in a variety of academic & training contexts as well as in social and political activities. This session will explore the benefits of using exercises that connect people with each other's stories, highlighting both differences and commonalities as opportunities for mutual understanding & social cohesion at a time when both cultural bias and populism threaten diversity and inclusion programs and efforts. We will take advantage of neuroscientific insights as to the nature of culture and human connectivity through neural mirroring. This will enable us to identify & offer solutions to the cultural challenges & behaviors that block participants from actively sharing personal perspectives & experiences across rank, gender, & generational divides. The workshop will put these principles into practice, showing in an innovative way how they can be used in real learning situations.

DIVERSITY & INNOVATION CONFERENCE

May 30-31, 2025 in Wrocław (Poland) & online

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HOW TO REGISTER

To register for the conference, the first step is to complete your payment. Once your payment is confirmed, you will receive a follow-up questionnaire where you can provide important details such as your specific needs, dietary requirements, accessibility requests, and expectations for the event.

The conference fee of **180 EUR** includes:

- Invitation-only pre-conference on-line gathering for presenters and attendees
- Conference welcome package with materials and local surprises
- Full access to the conference sessions and recordings
- Coffee breaks and networking opportunities
- Exclusive parallel program to experience the best of Wrocław's day and nightlife
- Certificate of attendance

[REGISTER HERE FOR ON-SITE](#)

The conference fee of **70 EUR** includes:

- Invitation-only pre-conference on-line gathering for presenters and attendees
- Full access to the conference on-line on 31st May and hybrid sessions and recordings
- Networking opportunities during on-line "coffee-breaks"
- Certificate of attendance

[REGISTER HERE FOR ON-LINE](#)

*If you are a member of a partner organization, contact them to receive a **discount code**.

If you have any questions in the meantime, feel free to reach out!

hello@diversityinnovation.academy

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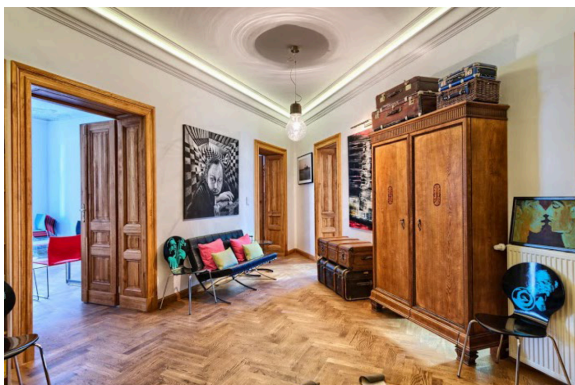
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LOCATION



Wrocław [also **WrocLove**], located in south-western Poland, in the region of Lower Silesia, is a vibrant and welcoming city known for its rich history, stunning architecture, and lively cultural scene. It's easily accessible by [bus](#), [train](#), or [plane](#), with direct connections from many European cities. We will show you its charming Old Town, the many picturesque bridges, cozy cafés, parks, and the river Odra. It's the perfect setting for meaningful conversations and intercultural inspiration.

Photo by Reiseuhu on Unsplash



📍 **Fabryka Sensus** (*Factory of Meaning*) is a creative space in Wrocław dedicated to coworking, learning, and community-building. Founded by Lucyna Schumacher and Anna Zelno in 2013, Fabryka Sensus was designed for workshops, meetings, and cultural events. With its cozy atmosphere and inspiring vibe, Fabryka Sensus is more than just a venue. It's a hub for people who care about diversity, creativity, and making a meaningful impact.

Zoom - Some sessions in Wrocław will be hybrid, with selected events streamed live. Online workshops and presentations will take place via Zoom and other interactive platforms. All access links will be provided after registration.

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SPONSORING AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

We warmly invite organizations, institutions, and professionals committed to diversity, inclusion, and intercultural learning to partner with us through a range of sponsorship and collaboration opportunities.

As a sponsor, you can:

- Showcase your brand to an international audience of educators, consultants, and changemakers
- Support the mission of inclusive, innovative education and social impact by sponsoring the participation of individuals who may not have the means to attend
- Gain visibility in our event materials, digital platforms, and conference spaces

In addition, we offer the chance to host pre- or post-conference workshops. These sessions allow you to:

- Present your tools, research, or services to a highly engaged audience
- Test new ideas, gather feedback, or deepen connections with potential partners

If you're interested in becoming a sponsor or leading a workshop, we'd love to hear from you! Let's co-create something meaningful.

Contact: hello@diversityinnovation.academy