



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



Shaping Europe's innovation, skills, and global agenda: Opportunities for Universities of Applied Sciences

Date: Thursday, 29 October 2026

Venue: Renaissance Brussels Hotel, Rue du Parnasse 10, 1050 Brussels

Background

Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) play a pivotal role at the intersection of innovation, skills development, and international collaboration. This event brings together leaders from German UAS with European policy makers and stakeholder organisations in order to explore how recent and forthcoming EU policy initiatives (Union of Skills Initiative, Global Gateway Strategy, European Innovation Act) can be leveraged and supported by UAS, especially given their mandate for applied research, regional impact, and talent development.

Through two complementary panels, participants will first learn about the EU strategic policy role of UAS in Europe's innovation and skills ecosystem, and then gain a forward-looking view of upcoming EU funding programmes, identifying concrete opportunities to strengthen applied research, workforce development and international partnerships within their institutions.

The event offers both strategic insights and practical guidance, enabling UAS leaders to position their institutions as key actors of Europe's evolving higher education and innovation landscape.



TIME	AGENDA
14:00-14:30	Welcome coffee and registration
14:30-14:35	Word of welcome Master of Ceremonies: <i>Tanja Kreetz, DAAD Office Brussels</i>
PART I – WHAT’S IN FOR UAS AND HOW CAN UAS STRATEGICALLY CONTRIBUTE TO EUROPE’S INNOVATION, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT? <i>Information and exchange about EU policy initiatives relevant for UAS</i>	
14:35-14:55	Union of Skills <i>What role can UAS play in supporting the Union of Skills and upskilling initiatives?</i> Speaker: <i>Claire Morel, European Commission: DG EAC, Unit EAC.C.1 Education and Skills for Innovation</i> <i>Followed by Q&A</i>
14:55-15:15	EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy <i>What is expected to be in for UAS under the EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy?</i> Speaker: <i>Ivan Lukac, Policy Officer, Access to Finance Unit, European Commission: DG RTD</i> <i>Followed by Q&A</i>
15:15-15:35	Global Gateway Strategy <i>What opportunities exist for UAS in international collaboration and global engagement under the Global Gateway initiative?</i> Speaker: <i>Annica Floren, Acting Head of Unit, European Commission: DG INTPA</i> <i>Followed by Q&A</i>
15:35-16:00	Networking coffee break



PART II – WHAT COMES NEXT? THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN FUNDING FOR UAS UNDER THE NEXT MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK (MFF 2028–2034): HORIZON EUROPE, ERASMUS+, GLOBAL EUROPE

16:00-17:20 Panel discussion

What are the priorities of the new programmes? Where will the opportunities lie for UAS and practice-oriented universities in the next EU funding cycle? What will / should change in the next generation of EU programmes to better support them?

Moderation: John Edwards, Secretary General of EURASHE

Panellists from the following institutions:

- *Frank Petrikowski, Education Attaché at the Permanent Representation of Germany*
- *Elena Nielsen, Danske Professionshøjskoler, Co-Chair of UAS4EUROPE*
- *Professor Ingela Tietze, Vice President of Pforzheim University*
- *Stefan Moritz, Secretary General European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME*
- *Jörg Niehoff, Deputy Head of ERA, Spreading Excellence & Research Careers Unit, European Commission: DG RTD*

Followed by Q&A

17:20-17:55 Moderated exchange among participants

Moderation: Tanja Kreetz

- *What models of European and international cooperation and knowledge exchange have proven most effective for UAS?*
- *How can UAS strengthen partnerships with industry to drive innovation and applied research within and beyond Europe?*

17:55-18:10 Wrap up and closing of the event

18:10-20:00 Networking dinner