

# FORUM

MEMBER  
MAGAZINE

*Discussing international education*



## EMPLOYABILITY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

- 15 NURSING EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS
- 24 IN CONVERSATION WITH RAJIKA BHANDARI
- 34 PREPARING FOR THE MODERN  
MULTILINGUAL WORKPLACE
- 43 GREENING EMPLOYABILITY:  
JOBS AS IF THE 21ST CENTURY MATTERED

---

# CONTENTS

## 04 EDITORIAL

## 05 CONTRIBUTORS

### 06 WHAT HAPPENS AFTER GRADUATION?

21st-century challenges call for a renewed focus on employability

### 09 PUTTING INTERNATIONAL GRADUATES TO WORK

Providing internationals with the extra support they need to enter the labour market

### 12 A VIEW FROM VENICE: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN ITALY

Internationalisation is helping bring down Europe's highest youth unemployment rate

### 15 NURSING EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS

Cooperating across borders to meet the ever-climbing demand for nurses

### 18 PROMOTING EMPLOYABILITY WITH SMART POLICY

Immigration policy can make or break international students' post-study ambitions

### 21 ALUMNI NETWORKS: CONNECTING TO GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES

When competing for jobs on a global scale, it helps to know the right people

### 24 IN CONVERSATION WITH RAJIKA BHANDARI

The President and CEO of the IC3 Institute discusses 21st-century employability

### 28 LISTENING ACROSS CULTURES

The ability to understand people from other cultures is one that's in high demand

### 31 INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: ALL FUN AND GAMES

A game-based approach to bringing international skills to domestic students

### 34 PREPARING FOR THE MODERN MULTILINGUAL WORKPLACE

In the 21st century, one language may not be enough to get the job done

### 37 BINATIONAL UNIVERSITIES: DOUBLE THE OPPORTUNITIES

Focusing on two countries' labour markets offers depth rather than breadth

### 40 SHORT STAYS REVISITED

A nuanced look at the relative gains from short and long-term mobility

### 43 GREENING EMPLOYABILITY: JOBS AS IF THE 21ST CENTURY MATTERED

Instilling the skills needed for tomorrow's economy

### 46 EAIE BLOG SPOT

#### Published by

European Association for International Education  
PO Box 11189, 1001 GD Amsterdam, the Netherlands  
TEL +31-20-344 51 00  
E-MAIL [info@eaie.org](mailto:info@eaie.org)  
[www.eaie.org](http://www.eaie.org)

#### Editor Douglas Proctor

Publications Committee Douglas Proctor (*Chair*),  
Irina Ferencz, Jos Beelen, Han Aarts, Lucia Brajkovic, Jacob  
Gibbons

#### Associate Director, Knowledge Development and Research

Laura E. Rumbley

#### Head of Marketing and Communications

Kellie Diepstraten

Editorial Coordinator Jacob Gibbons

Graphic Designers Nhu Nguyen, Laura Drew

E-MAIL [publications@eaie.org](mailto:publications@eaie.org)

Printed by Drukkerij Raddraaier, Amsterdam

Copyright © 2020 by the EAIE

All rights reserved. Extracts from *Forum* may be reproduced with permission of the EAIE. Unless stated otherwise, opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect the position of the EAIE.

ISSN 1389-0808

Photo: Shutterstock



15

“A shortage of nurses will be the biggest problem for national healthcare systems in the next decade”

NURSING EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS

24

“If I had to name just one key 21st-century skill, I would say it is the practice of ethics”

IN CONVERSATION WITH  
RAJIKA BHANDARI



34

“The aim is not to create fully bilingual academic experts but to enable students to be highly functional professionals in both national languages”

PREPARING FOR THE  
MODERN MULTILINGUAL WORKPLACE

43

“What if it’s actually the students who should be telling employers what skill sets to look for to meet the challenges of the 21st century?”

GREENING EMPLOYABILITY:  
JOBS AS IF THE 21ST CENTURY MATTERED



# EDITORIAL



It is hard to deny that employability is a hot topic in higher education. And yet, discussions around employability within the academy are never without controversy. To what extent must higher education prepare students for employment?

Does a period of outbound mobility boost a student's career prospects after graduation? If so, is it important what type of outbound mobility the student has chosen?

With the everyday employment of many thrown into disarray by COVID-19 and mounting concerns about the coming global recession, there could not be a better time for *Forum* magazine to look in more depth at employability for the next century and its multiple connections with international higher education.

In this edition, authors from Europe and further afield have looked at employability from a range of angles and share their insights on some of the key questions facing international educators in relation to employability skills and

graduate attributes, to the role of mobility in preparing students for the workplace, and to the graduate employment outcomes of international students. I am delighted that Rajika Bhandari (now President and CEO of the IC3 Institute, whose mission is to enable access to career and college counselling for high school students around the world) accepted the EAIE's invitation to be interviewed for this edition. Reflecting specifically on graduate skills, Rajika highlights the "ability to pivot" as a significant skill for future careers. I believe this will resonate with many readers, given that so many of us have pivoted to working from home over the last weeks and months.

Beyond the interview, this edition features a series of articles which explore graduate attributes and intercultural skills, including reflections from Liliana Gonzalez on key steps to skill development for operating in different cultural settings, and a 'serious game' to boost intercultural skills for the future job market outlined by Sabine Sainte-Rose, Fabienne Munch and Anne Bartel-Radic. Bilingual Bachelor's degrees at the University of Helsinki provide a clear example of how cross-cultural communication and language skills can be embedded at the curriculum level, as outlined by Åsa Mickwitz, Dragana Cvetanović, Heini Lehtonen and Auli Toom. Jessica Schüller then highlights how a binational Turkish-German university has adopted a holistic institutional strategy for developing graduate employability.

Another cluster of articles looks at the particular set of employability concerns faced by international students and their institutions, not least the predominant

focus on post-study work rights for international graduates. Brett Berquist provides an overview of this topic, and Gabi Binnie then shines a spotlight on the UK and its framework of support for international student employability. Louise Nicol and Vicky Lewis, on the other hand, question whether institutions are ready to actively prioritise graduate outcomes and employability for international students, while Maria Gallo and Sandra Rincon advocate for greater engagement with alumni networks in support of both institutions and students.

Rounding out this edition are a number of articles looking in greater depth at employability through particular lenses. Taking Italy as her example, Elena Borsetto questions how universities can support student employability in countries with high unemployment rates. Meanwhile, Natalia Österman takes a disciplinary approach, looking at the ins and outs of employment for nursing graduates. Davina Potts then seeks to reframe our understandings of learning abroad and its tie-in with gains in employability skills.

Closing out this edition, Scott Blair encourages us to think differently about the connections between employment and international higher education, pointing to the urgent need for the greening of employability. With growing reflections on how COVID-19 might be re-shaping approaches to work around the world, this final article encourages international educators to adjust their thinking to better prepare students for the workforce of tomorrow, rather than the workforce of today.

— DOUGLAS PROCTOR, EDITOR  
PUBLICATIONS@EAIE.ORG

# CONTRIBUTORS

## *Louise Nicol*

**Founder, Asia Careers Group**

Louise has been working in international education since participating in the the Japanese Exchange Teaching Program (JET). She has travelled the Trans-Siberian Railway and crossed the USA from coast to coast.

## *Vicky Lewis*

**Founder and director, Vicky Lewis Consulting**

When she found herself in a small university town in rural Wales, where the two main employment options were higher education and sheep farming, Vicky chose the former. She has studied in three countries and is an avid runner.

## *Gabi Binnie*

**Policy and research manager, Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services**

Gabi learned about the challenges facing international students while working for her student union. In her spare time, she is writing a children's book about mental health that features a cameo from her dog, Ned.

## *Elena Borsetto*

**Postdoctoral researcher and adjunct professor, Ca' Foscari University of Venice**

Elena has worked as a tutor for international students, and is currently researching the use of English in academic settings. Outside the office, she enjoys relaxing in her garden.

## *Natasha Österman*

**National coordinator for professional qualifications directive 2005/36/EC, Swedish Council for Higher Education**

The combination of her interest in international relations and her appreciation for high-quality education led Natasha to her career as a credential evaluator. Before that, her childhood dream was to become a veterinarian, and she still enjoys spending her free time with animals.

## *Brett Berquist*

**Director international, University of Auckland**

A speaker of three languages who has studied in four countries, Brett began his career in applied languages and gradually transitioned to international education leadership.

## *Sandra Rincon*

**Founder and president, Holland Alumni Network – Netherlands**

Sandra has been an immigrant since she was 10 years old. Her passion for international education stems from a desire to help others feel proud of their multicultural identities.

## *Maria Gallo*

**Founder and principal researcher, Keep in Touch Education**

After working in international student recruitment for her university, Maria came to focus on the role of alumni in enhancing the international student experience. She is an avid knitter, and in her travels she likes to hunt down local yarns.

## *Martha Liliana Gonzalez*

**Career development specialist, University of Calgary**

Liliana is passionate about supporting clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. She has studied in both Colombia and Canada, and in her free time enjoys acrylic painting and swimming.

## *Sabine Sainte-Rose*

**Associate director for promotion and internationalisation, Université Grenoble Alpes**

Sabine's passion for travelling and studying languages first led her to become a foreign language teacher, after which she moved into leadership positions at French international schools. Some of her pastimes include cooking with her teenagers and hiking in the Alps.

## *Fabienne Munch*

**Executive director, global initiatives and strategy, University of Chicago**

Fabienne's area of expertise is design research and multicultural team management. She has studied in France and the USA, and enjoys photography in her free time.

## *Anne Bartel-Radic*

**Professor, Sciences Po Grenoble**

Having studied in France, Anne has also spent a semester each in Brazil and the USA as a visiting scholar. Her research focuses on topics such as intercultural competence and learning from international experience.

## *Åsa Mickwitz*

**Senior lecturer, University of Helsinki**

Åsa's primary interests are in bilingual education and writing pedagogy. In her free time, she likes to binge-watch Lars von Trier movies.

## *Dragana Cvjetanovic*

**Researcher, University of Helsinki**

Dragana enjoys teaching and learning with her students. When she's not in the classroom, she does Tai chi and listens to lots of rap music.

## *Heini Lehtonen*

**Senior lecturer, University of Helsinki**

Heini taught Finnish as a second language before joining the Language Centre at the University of Helsinki. Singing different styles from across the world is her passion.

## *Auli Toom*

**Professor of higher education, University of Helsinki**

Auli enjoys doing research, supervising doctoral candidates and mentoring early-career researchers. In her spare time she enjoys running, reading and visits to her summer house.

## *Jessica Schüller*

**Graduate student, Tampere University and Danube University Krems**

After spending her final year of high school on exchange in German, Jessica went on to study at an American branch campus in Italy, which led to her interest in international education.

## *Davina Potts*

**Associate director careers, employability and global learning, University of Melbourne**

Davina has studied in Australia, Mexico and the USA. She currently lives in a converted church, where she has a Virgin of Guadalupe collection.

## *Scott Blair*

**Higher education consultant, assessment and sustainability**

Scott knew he wanted to work in international education after spending his final two years of university abroad. His hobbies include ragtime piano and collecting World War I portraiture postcards.



IN CONVERSATION WITH

**RAJIKA  
BHANDARI**

---

JACOB GIBBONS  
EAIE

---

After many years at the Institute of International Education spent thinking and writing about what happens when people cross borders, Rajika Bhandari is currently President and CEO of the IC3 Institute. In discussing the evolving nature of employability, she highlighted the need for employees of the future to be able to pivot as circumstances and industries change, and the need for higher education institutions to reach beyond the silos they inhabit.

**Earlier this year, you were appointed as President and CEO of the IC3 Institute, which has a mission to enable access to career and college counselling for high school students around the world. To what extent do you believe that employability drives the decisions which students make about an international education?**

**RB:** Employability is absolutely critical in student decision-making. Students and families are looking at the full pipeline of the future for students; it's not just about the academic degree, but what is the viability of that education when it comes to jobs and employment? Many rankings also now assess higher education institutions not just on academic indicators, but also their ability to graduate students who are truly employable. The relevance of education for employment will become even more important once we are past the current pandemic, and with postsecondary education and the workforce having been disrupted so significantly. In fact, in recent years we've even seen many of the ranking systems now begin to rank institutions not just on academic rigour and research, but also on how good a job they're doing of actually being able to graduate students who are truly employable.

What international students are allowed to do right after their study programme in terms of work is a huge factor in their international education decisions. Repeated surveys of prospective and current international students has shown that post-study opportunities are extremely important for them.

Likewise, when we look at different countries and their ability to attract global talent, fluctuations in international student enrolment over the past few years are clearly tied to what students can do post-graduation. We've seen that in the case of the UK, where restrictions on the post-study work option had an impact on their international student numbers; those numbers have now rebounded significantly since they liberalised that programme once again.

---

**What students are allowed to do right after their study programme in terms of work is a huge factor in their international education decisions**

---

The same thing has played out in the US, where post-study work opportunities are under threat, and have likely had an impact on international student enrolments.

**Many institutions outline a set of graduate attributes which they seek to foster in their student body, including global sensitivity and intercultural competency. For international educators, which of these transversal skills do you think are most crucial for 21st-century employability?**

**RB:** I believe that there is no difference in the skill sets that ought to be fostered in future employees, regardless of whether they are domestic or international. At its core, to effectively prepare any student to be a productive and purposeful employee of the future and to be a global citizen means for them to be exposed to an international component in some shape or form, if not via traditional mobility then by means of Internationalisation at Home or an internationalised curriculum.

If I had to name just one key 21st-century skill, I would say it is the practice of ethics, and how to make ethically informed decisions in our day-to-day lives and pursuits. So important is this skill and mindset that the OECD considers it an essential component of its 'Future of Education and Learning 2030' conceptual learning framework, and it is of course enshrined in the SDGs as well. As our existence becomes increasingly automated through AI, the appropriate and ethical applications of technology – how to make nuanced decisions that are based more on

globally that are resulting from our planned stillness as a society.

**Can you point to particular national or regional skills or employability programmes which stand out as examples of good practice? How does internationalisation factor into these programmes?**

**RB:** Many countries are now aligning their internationalisation strategy with an overarching national skills and talent strategy to ensure that their country has the skills and talent that its industries need. However, the focus on international students in these strategies has often been limited to the recruitment aspect of it, *ie* at the point of entry into the talent pipeline. But once international students are in the country, there isn't enough attention paid to what happens to this group of students and their career pathways. What further complicates the picture is that a country's immigration policy can limit international students' opportunities after graduation: what they can actually pursue

Germany, Australia and New Zealand are all good examples of this kind of approach. But even so, their focus is much more on students' academic success rather than their professional outcomes once they have left the in-country institution. In that regard, beyond small research studies and modest interventions, we know very little about the career pathways and the successes or failures of preparing international students for their professional futures.

**Many institutions seek to leverage their business and industry connections to secure international placements or internships for students. How valuable are these initiatives for students? Do they help to set realistic employer expectations of graduates subsequently entering the labour market?**

**RB:** Any sort of applied learning opportunity like an internship is crucial for students. In fact, that's also one of the core beliefs at the IC3 Institute, where we work with schools and teachers to prepare students early on to understand the application of academic subjects to the real world of careers.

While internships are beneficial to students, it is not always a win-win situation for employers, as interns come in with academic or content knowledge but are often lacking the basic skills that enable efficiency and productivity in the workplace, such as time management, business communication skills and the ability to evaluate and curate information. For the internship model to work effectively for both parties, higher

---

## If I had to name just one key 21st-century skill, I would say it is the practice of ethics

---

human conscience and values – is going to become critical. Even beyond technology, as a society we will need to evaluate and assess the environmental, political and societal impact of our actions. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought this to the forefront, where despite large-scale suffering we are also seeing unintended positive impacts on the environment

post-study is often severely restricted, and that's a real challenge as we think about how to shape the future of the international student population.

However, there are some countries that are explicitly focusing not just on recruitment but also on the academic success of students once they are in the country.

education institutions and industry partners need to collaborate more to ensure that students are not graduating with these fundamental skills gaps.

**What changes to the world of work have you witnessed in your career, and how do you see these dynamics being impacted by recent trends like the COVID-19 pandemic? What are your predictions of the changes that students will face in the future, and in what ways can international educators support them to gain the skills they will need?**

RB: One shift I have witnessed is that of being a generalist versus a specialist. At

One of my observations which has been sharpened by the COVID-19 crisis is that international educators need to engage with the full ecosystem of a student's life. This includes schools, where the student journey begins, as well as higher education institutions and then eventually the workplace. We need a systems approach to addressing all the issues we're facing right now. With the disruptions to education and the world of work, in addition to effective college and career counselling, students are also going to need social and emotional support for navigating an uncertain terrain. How international educators can better serve students is to move beyond their own professional silo (other

---

## Now an emphasis is being placed on the ability to 'pivot' and build a curated portfolio of knowledge and skills

---

one time, the idea was that we need to prepare students to be generalists with a broad array of knowledge and skills. Then came the era of the specialist, which has been particularly important as countries have moved towards knowledge economies. Now, with COVID-19, we have come full circle, with an emphasis being placed on the ability to 'pivot' and building a carefully curated portfolio of knowledge and skills that allows individuals to move nimbly from one job to another, leveraging different combinations of skills as needed. It's about demonstrating one's value and relevance rather than relying solely on one's formal qualifications or credentials.

industries inhabit their own silos as well); it is not just about international education. It is about international development, it is about addressing broader global social challenges, and really thinking about how we are preparing these students – both international and domestic – to address the grand challenges of the future.



# Get the most out of your EAIE membership



Connect with peers  
via the EAIE  
Member Directory



Join  
the mentorship  
programme



Access in-depth  
resources in the  
EAIE online library

---

Learn more at [www.eaie.org](http://www.eaie.org)



# EAIE | GOTHENBURG

07-10 SEPTEMBER

**BOLDER. BRAVER. GO.**

**Call for proposals opens in September**  
[www.eaie.org/gothenburg](http://www.eaie.org/gothenburg)