

Relational Internationalization in the Pheriphery: Attracting and Retaining International Talent Beyond “Brain Gain”

Symposium Programme

28th August 2026, 15:30–18:00

Vilnius University, Faculty of Philosophy, Room 207

15:30–15:40 | Welcome & Framing

Welcome Speech: **Prof. Dr. Gintaras Valušis**, Vice-Rector, Vilnius University (Lithuania), **Prof. Habil. Dr. Rimantas Želvys**, Head of Education Policy Centre, Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Framing: **Prof. Dr. Liudvika Leišytė**, Deputy Director of the Center of Higher Education, Technical University of Dortmund (Germany), Visiting Professor, Vilnius University (Lithuania), **Prof. Dr. Rasa Pauliukaitė**, Chair of the Board of Association "Futura Scientia", Faculty Member of Faculty of Chemistry and Geosciences, Vilnius University (Lithuania)

15:40–16:15 | Keynote Address "International Academic Mobility and Talent Retention: A Perspective from Japan"

Prof. Dr. Futao Huang, Faculty Member of Research Institute of Higher Education, Hiroshima University (Japan)

16:15–17:15 | Panel Discussion "Attracting Is Not Enough: Retention, Belonging, and Institutional Change"

Guiding Questions: What structural barriers undermine retention of foreign academic staff in higher education and research systems like Lithuania? How can tenure, promotion, and language policies become more inclusive of academics from abroad? What lessons can be learned from lived experiences as a foreign academic, and how have structures, like research funding, helped to build a career abroad? How can institutions move from competitive talent extraction to sustainable academic communities?

Chair: **Prof. Dr. Liudvika Leišytė**, Deputy Director of the Center of Higher Education, Technical University of Dortmund (Germany), Visiting Professor, Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Panelists: **Prof. Dr. Gintaras Valušis**, Vice-Rector, Vilnius University (Lithuania), **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ainius Lašas**, Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences Humanities and Arts, Kaunas Technology University (Lithuania), **Prof. Dr. Eugenijus Butkus**, Former Chair of Research Council of Lithuania, Alina Boutiuc-Kaiser, Faculty Member of Institute of Educational Science, University of Education Freiburg (Germany), **Prof. Dr. Daumantas Matulis**, Head of Department of Biothermodynamics and Drug Design, Former Head of Life Sciences Center, Vilnius University (Lithuania), **Dr. Karina Maldonado-Mariscal**, Senior Researcher at Social Research Centre, Technical University of Dortmund (Germany), Visiting Professor, Kaunas Technology University (Lithuania), **Dr. Toma Pustelnikovaitė**, Lecturer at Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University (UK), **Prof. Dr. Ramūnas Stepanauskas**, Director of Single Cell Genomics Center, Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences (US), Professor, Aalborg University (Denmark).

17:15–17:30 | Discussion with the Audience (focus on translating insights into institutional practices & identifying policy reform priorities)

17:30–18:00 | Closing Remarks & Reception

Organized by:



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Philosophy