



GLOBALISATION FORUM

2026

2-3 November
Apeldoorn, the Netherlands



WITTENBORG
University of Applied Sciences



Globalisation Forum 2026 & 1st International Staff Week

The Globalisation Forum is Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences' annual international platform for dialogue, collaboration and knowledge exchange on the challenges and opportunities shaping our globalised world. Now in its third edition, the Forum brings together academics, researchers, students, industry professionals, policymakers and institutional leaders from across Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Taking place on 2–3 November 2026 in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands, the Globalisation Forum features keynote speeches, panel discussions, research presentations, interactive workshops, student debates and networking activities. The Forum forms the central academic programme of **Wittenborg's International Staff Week (2–6 November 2026)** and connects with a wider programme of international collaboration, student project activities and intercultural engagement taking place throughout the week.

The 2026 edition will welcome participants from partner universities, research projects, public institutions and industry organisations. The programme will feature discussions on the future of higher education, quality assurance, artificial intelligence, sustainability, internationalisation, workforce development, global governance and other contemporary issues shaping societies worldwide.

Inspired by Wittenborg's research agenda, the Forum encourages interdisciplinary exchange across ten thematic areas, including technology, trade, migration, sustainability, ethics, health, education, culture and the future of work. Participants are invited not only to share research and professional practice but also to contribute to wider discussions on how education, innovation and international cooperation can support positive global change.

The Globalisation Forum reflects Wittenborg's commitment to internationalisation, applied research, intercultural dialogue and the building of meaningful partnerships that extend beyond borders.

Highlights:

1st International Staff Week

The Forum is linked to Erasmus+ staff mobility and serves as a meeting point for Wittenborg's growing network of international partner universities:

- Al-Balqa Applied University – Jordan
- Nile University – Egypt
- Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport – Egypt
- University of Laghouat – Algeria
- University of Sfax – Tunisia
- Georgian National University SEU – Georgia
- Georgian Technical University (GTU) – Georgia
- European University – Georgia
- Georgian American University – Georgia

Student-Centred Learning

Alongside academic sessions, students participate in debate competitions, presentations, project activities and intercultural learning experiences, supported by academics and professionals from around the world.

Real-World Impact

The programme connects research, policy, industry practice and education through discussions on AI, sustainability, lifelong learning, quality assurance in higher education, XR technologies, workforce development and international collaboration.

What to Expect

- International panel discussions
- Research and paper presentations
- Keynote speeches
- Student debates and presentations
- Erasmus+ mobility & networking activities
- Research project dissemination events
- Intercultural exchange activities
- Partnership-building opportunities

DAY 1

2 November 2026

Apenheul Conference Hall

J.C. Wilsaan 21, 7313 HK Apeldoorn

08:30 – 09:45

Walk-in & Registration

10:00 – 10:15

Opening Ceremony & Welcome Speeches

[Dr Nikita Pahwa](#)

[Globalisation Forum Host](#)

Dr Nikita Pahwa is Associate Professor & Programme Coordinator at Wittenborg. She is an economist, researcher, and educator with a PhD in Economics. Her academic work combines teaching and research in economics, statistics, data analytics, econometrics, fiscal policy, and public finance. She is a published author of journal articles and book chapters in her areas of expertise. Her emerging research interests include environmental economics, and health economics.





Peter Birdsall

Peter Birdsall is President and Chair of Executive at Wittenborg and oversees the strategic direction of the most international, independent business school in the Netherlands. He is passionate about quality higher education in the Netherlands, that is inclusive, diverse and embraces internationalisation. His responsibilities include driving Wittenborg's mission to achieve top-tier status among Dutch universities of applied sciences, with a focus on international management and sustainable business development.

Roel Welsing

Roel Welsing is Managing Director of Apenheul since 2017. At Apenheul, Roel has strengthened revenues from events, admissions and in-park spending, expanded sustainable impact through initiatives such as the Animal Welfare Score and Healthy Day Out, and implemented a new organisational structure. Before joining Apenheul, at Triodos Bank, he helped increase the customer base eightfold, build a transparent customer community, establish business-to-business marketing and customer contact operations, and improve service productivity. His work has received major professional recognition, including Marketer of the Year, a Golden Effie and the Coq d'Honneur, and he authored *Connecting Is the New Selling*, a book on successful responsible enterprise.



10:15 – 11:15

Panel Discussion: The Future of Higher Education in Times of Rapid Change



Prof. Dr Ron Tuninga

Prof. Dr. Ron Tuninga is a Senior Academic Advisor & Rector Emeritus at Wittenborg and an internationally recognised academic leader in business and management education. He brings extensive experience from senior leadership positions across Europe, Africa, the Middle East and the Americas, as well as a distinguished career as professor, researcher and consultant.

Dr Sandra Haddad

Dr Sandra Haddad is the Dean of the College of International Transport and Logistics, Alamein at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport. Dr. Haddad is also a member of the board of directors of Canal Shipping Agencies Company, affiliated to the Holding Company for Land and Maritime Transport, Egyptian Ministry of Transport, Egypt.

She obtained her Ph.D. in the Cross-functional Relationship between Marketing and Supply Chain Management from Liverpool John Moores University in the UK. Dr. Haddad was awarded the Fellowship of the British Higher Education Academy (FHEA). She is a professional consultant for several businesses, in addition to managing EU-funded projects.





[Prof. Tamar Lominadze](#)

Prof. Tamar Lominadze is the Vice-Rector of Georgian Technical University (GTU) and a Professor at the Faculty of Informatics and Control Systems. She previously served as Dean of the Faculty of Informatics and Control Systems and as an advisor to the University Rector on international relations, public relations, and scientific matters.



[Dr Mohamed Ahmed Afifi](#)

Dr Mohamed Ahmed Afifi is an Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Nile University, Egypt. Before joining Nile University, he served as a Research Fellow at Brunel University London (2019–2022), where he led work on the thermomechanical processing of automotive aluminium alloys in collaboration with Constellium SE. He is also a full member of the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel

11:15 – 11:30

Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:30

Panel Discussion: Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Dr Rauf Abdul

Dr Rauf Abdul is the Dean at Wittenborg and oversees the strategic development of the School of Business, driving institutional growth, securing global accreditations, and fostering international partnerships with institutions.

Rauf teaches and researches human resource management, organisational behaviour, higher education management, and the future of work. His publications in journals such as *Quality in Higher Education*, *Industry and Higher Education*, and *Heliyon* focus on HRM, AI in business, and advancements in business education. He also contributes to international accreditation panels, enhancing global standards in business education.



Dr Sophio Khundadze

Dr Sophio Khundadze earned her Doctor of Business Administration from International Black Sea University (2010) and holds an ACCA Diploma in Accounting and Business.

With 13 years of experience in educational program development and quality assurance, she has held leadership positions at multiple Georgian universities and since 2020, is Vice-Rector for Quality Enhancement at European University.



She serves as an accreditation expert for Georgia's NCEQE (since 2018), Kazakhstan's IAAR (since 2019), and Germany's FIBAA (since 2025). Sophio Khundadze has published scholarly works including a monograph and research articles, and is a member of the Educational Committee and Lifelong Learning Supervisory Board at the Georgian Federation of Professional Accountants and Auditors.

Prof. Haitham Alshibly

Prof. Haitham Alshibly is a senior academic and higher education leader at Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU), Jordan, with extensive experience in quality assurance, accreditation, strategic planning, institutional development, and higher education management.

He currently serves as Vice President for Quality assurance and Center Affairs at Al-Balqa Applied University and is a faculty member at the Faculty of Business. His academic and administrative career includes senior responsibilities related to quality assurance, institutional planning, accreditation, performance improvement, and the development of academic systems and practices.



12:30 – 13:30

Lunch Break

13:30 – 14:30

Panel Discussion: Empowering Emerging Skill Learners with Green Competences (Erasmus+ Green4ADU project)



Dr Cha-Hsuan Liu

Dr Cha-Hsuan Liu is Associate Professor of Applied Sciences at Wittenborg, is a versatile and accomplished professional with a multi-disciplinary background. She has significant expertise in healthcare, education, social policy, management and innovation. She is active in both academia and the public sector. She is currently a Research Fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies at Leiden University. Her work has been widely published and

recognised in academic and media circles. She delivers public speeches and training on occasions across borders. Her commitment to societal impact is reflected in her involvement in community engagement on a global level, as shown by her contribution to motivating society towards an inclusive and sustainable world.



Marcus Banai

Marcus Banai is the coordinator for the Hague network of energy coaches for 4 years, comprising of 19 initiatives and is also one of the founders of Energy Equal Laak, focusing on sustainability and energy initiatives. With experience in coaching and sustainability, with a strong emphasis on supporting grassroots initiatives.

Dr Jan Lust

Jan Lust holds a PhD in Development Studies from the Autonomous University of Zacatecas, Mexico and a master's in Economy from the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Lust is the author of several books and book chapters published by Routledge and Palgrave Macmillan, and has written extensively on economic development models, extractivism, labour precarity and inequality. His papers have appeared in high-ranked peer-reviewed journals including *Globalizations*, *Third World Quarterly*, *Latin American Perspectives* and *Critical Sociology*. He also serves as a peer

reviewer for international journals such as *Latin American Research Review*, *New Political Economy*, *Mineral Economics*, *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* and *Development and Change*.



14:30 – 14:45

Launch of Joinalyse Platform



Jasper van Doorn



Dr Myra Qiu

Joinalyse is an academic research platform connecting students, researchers and academic staff within a verified higher education ecosystem. Its integrated survey tools support questionnaire creation, distribution, data collection and initial analysis, helping users turn research questions into evidence. Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences is the first higher education institution to collaborate with Joinalyse, piloting the platform with its students and staff. This partnership supports practical research learning and provides feedback to guide the platform's development. At the Globalisation Forum, Joinalyse will introduce its approach to making academic research more accessible and collaborative, with opportunities for engagement across institutions and international communities.

14:45 – 15:00

Coffee Break

15:00 – 16:30

Kick-off & Debate Training (for BA and MA students)



Dr Alex Bauer

Alexander Bauer, PhD, is Associate Professor of Applied Sciences at Wittenborg and has more than a decade of international sales and management experience. With over a decade of experience as an international sales manager, he brings practical expertise to his courses, having led global sales teams and conducted negotiations across North and South America, Europe, and Asia. His research focuses on sales competition in education, the use of sales labs in training, and the pandemic's impact

on businesses and sales in Austria. Additionally, he serves as an Associate Lecturer in Austria, Germany, and Slovenia, and provides training in presentation skills, rhetoric, and sales.

16:30 – 17:30

Joinalyse workshop, Q&A (for BA and MA students)

END of DAY 1

DAY 2

November 3, 2026

Spoorstraat Campus

Spoorstraat 23, 7311 PE Apeldoorn

08:30 – 09:15

Walk-in & Registration

09:30 – 10:00

Keynote: Global Challenges in the Era of AI: Implications for Skills

Prof. Dr Ron Tuninga

10:00 – 11:00

Panel Discussion: Internationalisation in HE: The Cases of the Netherlands, Georgia and Jordan

Stephen Orme

Stephen Orme is Head of Business Development & Operations at Wittenborg. With over 20 years of experience in international education, Stephen oversees strategic partnerships, operational management and related projects, driving Wittenborg's growth and global engagement. His responsibilities include forging and maintaining collaborations with international institutions, optimising operational processes, and supporting Wittenborg's mission to excel in international business education. Stephen is also Vice-President of the European Association for International Education (EAIE).





Ana Pochkhua

Ana Pochkhua is Head of the Strategic Development Office at the European University (Tbilisi, Georgia), where she leads the university's strategic planning, organizational development, and data-driven decision-making. She holds a Master's degree in Public Administration and has five years of professional experience in policy planning and strategic development. She has worked in the Policy Planning Unit at the Administration of the Government of Georgia, contributing to the country's Public Administration Reform, with a focus on policy planning and evidence-based policymaking. Her

professional interests include strategic planning, organizational development, evidence-based policymaking, and higher education strategic development.



Tamara Mechurchlishvili

Tamara Mechurchlishvili is Head of the International Relations Office at Georgian American University (GAU) in Tbilisi. She studied Sociology at Tbilisi State University and the University of Porto, and later spent time at the University for Foreigners of Siena, where she studied Italian language and culture. She speaks five languages and has more than nine years of experience working in international cooperation.



Prof. Tariq Al-Azab

Prof. Tariq Al-Azab is a senior academic and higher education leader at Al-Balqa Applied

University (BAU), Jordan, with extensive experience in university management, international cooperation, vocational and applied education, and institutional capacity building.

He has held several senior leadership positions at BAU, including Vice President for Vocational

Education, Counselor to the University President, and Dean of two university colleges. Throughout his career, he has contributed to national committees and strategic initiatives concerned with higher education, vocational and technical education, employability, and university-industry cooperation.

11:00 – 11:15

Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:15

Panel Discussion: AI in Higher Education: Ethics, Practice and Employability



Dr Dadi Chen

Dr Dadi Chen is Deputy Head of School of Business at Wittenborg's Amsterdam study location, Associate Professor of Applied Sciences and Programme Coordinator. He plays a key role in ensuring academic quality and effective educational management. Dadi teaches modules such as Research Methods, Change Management in Education, supervises student graduation assignments, and coordinates the PGCert programme in teaching and learning. His

research focuses on intercultural communication, educational management, and curriculum design, and he actively participates in and coordinates research projects to advance Wittenborg's academic mission.

Robert Muster

Robert Muster is Senior Lecturer at Wittenborg. Robert is a Data Science Researcher and Teacher with expertise in data science, statistics, research methods for social sciences, artificial intelligence, network science, business analytics, digital transformation, marketing, computer programming, information management, open science and digital education.



He is currently finalising his doctoral research in High-Quality Open Digital Education, using data science to improve the quality of digital learning. Before joining Wittenborg, he was a researcher and teacher at Twente University in the Netherlands. He has contributed to more than ten mid to large-scale research projects and co-founded the Behavioural Data Science Incubator at the University of Twente, helping to integrate data science into the Human Innovation Cluster.

Beyond teaching and research, Robert has supervised bachelor's and master's students at Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Twente University and Nyenrode Business University.

Dr Davide Parrilli

Davide M. Parrilli is a consultant, lecturer, and researcher specializing in data ethics, privacy, and AI. He holds degrees in law and management (LL.M., cum laude, from Tilburg University; DES, cum laude, from ICHEC Brussels Management School, Belgium).

In 2024, he earned a European PhD (cum laude) from IADE in Lisbon, Portugal, with research focused on human-centered service design, privacy, and ethics. In 2025, he completed postdoctoral research at the Delft University of Technology.

He is currently a lecturer in data and business ethics at Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences and a consultant at DPM Studio Consulting.





Dr Andreea Nicolau

Dr Andreea Nicolau is a workplace researcher and coach whose work sits at the intersection of organisational psychology, learning and development, sustainable performance, and human-AI interaction. She is a guest researcher at Eindhoven University of Technology and Founder of the Institute for Sustainable Human Performance. Drawing on more than 17 years of organisational experience alongside her academic research, she examines how learning

processes and emerging technologies can support critical thinking, reflection, and continued capability development. Her current work explores the conditions under which GenAI use can become a developmental resource rather than simply a tool for faster task completion.

12:15 – 13:00

Lunch Break

13:00 – 14:30

Panel Discussion: The Role of XR/VR in Tourism Education: Preparing Talent for a Digital Future (Erasmus+ COVE TourXperience project)

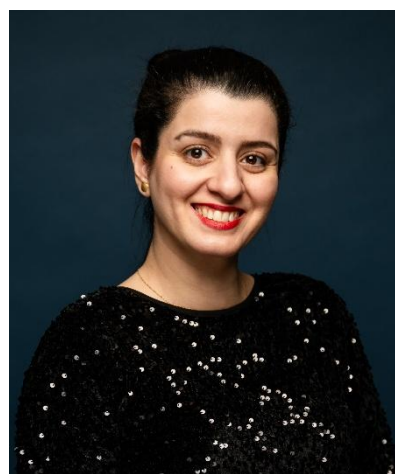
Emmah Muchoki

Emmah Muchoki is a lecturer at Wittenborg teaching various subjects in the domain of Hospitality and Sports Management. Emmah is an avid campaigner on the importance of education and very passionate about lecturing. Her areas of expertise include classroom skills, classroom management, curriculum development and exam development. She is keen on fostering and encouraging student learning in and out of the classroom environment. Her research interests include wildlife tourism, sustainable tourism, climate change, and consumer buying behaviour in hospitality and tourism. Emmah is one of Wittenborg's researchers in TourXperience Erasmus+ CoVE project.



Dr Vajihe Shojaei

Dr Vajihe Shojaei, Assistant Professor of Applied Sciences, has a strong international background in academia and industry. She holds a PhD in International Marketing, an MBA, and a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering. With over a decade of experience in international marketing and higher education, Vajihe teaches courses in branding, digital strategy, market research, and lead generation, while also designing curricula to bridge academic theory and industry practice. Her research focuses on international marketing and its applications in global business contexts, contributing to applied knowledge in the field. Vajihe also provides consultancy and professional coaching, empowering students and organisations with innovative strategies. Vajihe is one of Wittenborg's researchers in TourXperience Erasmus+ CoVE project.



Dr Vanessa de Oliveira - Menezes

Dr Vanessa de Oliveira - Menezes is Associate Professor of Applied Sciences at Wittenborg. With over 20 years of teaching experience, Vanessa draws on her academic background to deliver technical, undergraduate, and postgraduate courses in Tourism, Hotel Management, and Business Management. Her responsibilities include curriculum development and student supervision, fostering practical and theoretical skills in her fields. Her research focuses on tourism management



and human resources in hospitality, with contributions to peer-reviewed journals, including her roles on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Tourism - Studies and Research in Tourism* and the Reviewers' Committee for the *International Journal of Academic Research in Management*.



Stefanie Bertolazzi

Stefania Bertolazzi is an EU Project Manager and Project Coordinator at CEIPES ETS, where she leads the Erasmus+ CoVE project TourXpeRience. She holds a PhD in Mediterranean Studies from LUMSA University, a Master's in Diplomacy from ISPI, and a Master's degree in International Relations. Her expertise spans EU project management, sustainable development, green competencies, circular economy, and digital transformation in Vocational Education and

Training (VET). At CEIPES, she oversees international European partnerships, driving innovation and capacity building in sustainable tourism and digital education.

Dr Mariola Chrzanowska

Dr Mariola Chrzanowska is an Assistant Professor at Warsaw University of Life Sciences-SGGW, Poland, where she teaches statistics and econometrics. She has co-authored research on data visualisation in university teaching, exploring how the way information is presented can help or hinder students' understanding. Her international educational experience includes involvement in the European Master in Official Statistics (EMOS) programme.



14:30 – 14:45

Coffee Break

14:45 – 15:30

Building Sustainable Skills for Adult Learners: Erasmus+ Green4ADU project Insights and Recommendations

Dr. Cha-Hsuan Liu

15:30 – 16:30

Parallel Paper Presentations

1. Alex Bauer, Associate Professor of Applied Sciences, Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands & Raymond Dettwiler, Lecturer, FHNW University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW), Switzerland

Evaluating and Enhancing (Sales) Negotiation Skills in Educational Settings: A Critical Examination (of Role Plays) in Developing Key Negotiation (Sales) Skills

(Room W0.07)

2. Ana Pochkhua, Head of Strategic Development Office & Sophio Khundadze, Vice-rector for Quality Enhancement, European University, Georgia

Internationalising the Curriculum: Concepts, Design and Quality Assurance

(Room W0.07)

3. Jan Lust, Lecturer, Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands

The persistence of Peru's limited insertion in the world economy

(Room W0.08)

4. Nino Kavtaradze, Faculty of Business Technologies, Professor, Georgian Technical University, Georgia

The Importance of Digitalisation in Implementing the Case Study Teaching Method for Undergraduate Business Students in Georgia

(Room W0.08)

5. Cha-Hsuan Liu, Associate Professor of Applied Sciences, Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands

Key Determinants of Effective Green Upskilling: Insights from the Green4ADU project

(Room W1.03 & 1.04)

END of DAY 2