

Programme

Aurora Annual Conference 2026

18 – 21 May 2026

Universität Duisburg-Essen

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PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME

Monday, 18 May
UDE Campus Duisburg

09:00 – 12:00	Students Council <i>SG135 (1st floor), Geibelstraße 41</i>
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch Break <i>UDE Canteen (food service – 1st floor, reserved tables – ground floor), Lotharstraße 23-25 or U-Café, Lotharstraße 65</i>
13:00 – 14:00	Students Council <i>SG135 (1st floor), Geibelstraße 41</i>
12:00 – 13:30	Presidents' Lunch
13:30 – 16:45	Presidents' Tour
16:00 – 17:00	Welcome and Registration <i>Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
17:00 – 19:00	Opening Ceremony – Handover of Presidency <i>Audimax, LX Building, Lotharstraße 63a</i> Opening Speeches <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. Barbara Albert, Universität Duisburg-Essen• Dr. Ramon Puras, Aurora Handover of the Presidency <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. Veronika Sexl, Universität Innsbruck• Prof. Margrethe Jonkman, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam Seizmic-Awards <i>Introduction: Prof. Barbara Albert</i> Keynote <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Mai Thi Nguyen-Kim, Chemist and Science Journalist <i>Introduction: Prof. Barbara Albert</i>
19:00 – 20:00	Reception with Light Bites and Drinks <i>Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
20:00 – 23:00	Presidents' Dinner <i>faktorei21 Mülheimer Str. 213, 47058 Duisburg</i>
20:00 – 23:00	ICs Dinner (at own expenses) <i>60 seconds to Napoli Mercatorstraße 1b, 47051 Duisburg</i>

 Closed Session

 Group Session

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 19 May
UDE Campus Duisburg

08:15 – 9:00	Welcome and Registration <i>Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
08:20 – 9:00	Delegation Group Photos: <i>Location at UDE Campus Duisburg tbc</i>
09:00 – 10:30	Plenary Session 1: The Erosion of Trust in Academia? Responses from Universities and Research Organizations in Europe <i>LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i> Opening Speech <ul style="list-style-type: none">Prof. Barbara Albert Keynote Speeches <ul style="list-style-type: none">Prof. Laure Garrigue Antar, UPECProf. Marlene Altenmüller, Leibniz Institute for Psychology, TrierDr. Donato Sitaro, UNINA Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">Dr. Jan Marco Müller, European CommissionDr. Catherine Letcher Lazo, DAAD <i>Moderator: Dr. Julia Schwanholz, UDE</i>
10:30 – 10:50	Coffee Break <i>Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
10:40 – 10:50	Delegation Group Photos: <i>Location at UDE Campus Duisburg tbc</i>
10:50 – 11:00	Group Photo All Participants <i>Location at UDE Campus Duisburg tbc</i>
11:00 – 12:00	Plenary Session 2: Aurora 2030 Midway: Achievements, Challenges, and the Road Ahead <i>LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Dr. Ramon Puras, Aurora Secretary GeneralProf. Janette Walde, Universität InnsbruckProf. Robin Banerjee, University of SussexProf. Kai Hockers, Copenhagen Business SchoolDr. Silvester Draaijer, Vrije Universiteit AmsterdamEliška Karasová, Palacký University Olomouc <i>Moderator: Fanney Karlsdóttir, University of Iceland; Alexander Lindemans, Aurora Central Office</i>
12:05 – 12:25	Delegation Group Photos: <i>Location at UDE Campus Duisburg tbc</i>



Plenary Session



Group Session

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 19 May
UDE Campus Duisburg

12:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break <i>UDE Canteen, Lotharstraße 23-25 or U-Café, Lotharstraße 65</i>
13:00 – 14:00	Introduction Session of University of Sussex <i>LA 013 (ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. Robin Banerjee, US• Louise Turton, US• Matt Montgomery, US• Annie McEntee, US
14:00 – 16:00	Workshops Transdisciplinary European Research Driven Educational Hub (Barbara Buchenau) <i>LA 011b (ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i> Enhancing Quality of Research through an AURORA Research and Innovation Community (Matthias Beekmann, Halldór Jónsson) <i>LR 106 Senats-Saal/Gerhard-Mercator-Haus (1st floor), Lotharstraße 57</i>
15:00 – 16:00	WP8 General Meeting (closed session for WP8 members) (Nanna Teitsdóttir, Marina Vives) <i>LK 051 (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65</i>
14:00 – 16:00	Presidents' Strategy Meeting <i>LR 007 Mercator-Saal/Gerhard-Mercator-Haus (ground floor), Lotharstraße 57</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Coffee Break <i>Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Poster Session <i>Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
16:30 – 17:30	General Council Meeting <i>LR 007 Mercator-Saal//Gerhard-Mercator-Haus (ground floor), Lotharstraße 57</i>
18:00	Start of Social Activity
18:45 – 19:45	Social Activity VRs
20:00 – 23:00	VRs Dinner



Closed Workshop



Open Workshop / Session



Closed Session

PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 20 May
UDE Campus Duisburg

08:30 – 09:00

Coffee Break

Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

Plenary Session 3:

Innopreneurship: From Peer Review to Revenue

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

09:00 – 10:30

- Prof. Anne-Karen Hueske, Copenhagen Business School
- Dana Pietralla, paged
- Prof. Hannes Rothe, University of Duisburg-Essen
- Livia Zimmermann, EPITHEL

Moderator: Dr. Tomasz Waliczko, Aurora Coordinator, University of Duisburg-Essen

10:30 – 11:00

Coffee Break & Cutting the 10th Anniversary Cake

Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

Plenary Session 4:

Window into Student Representation

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

11:00 – 12:30

- Alma Ágústsdóttir, University of Iceland
- Eliška Karasová, Palacký University Olomouc
- Erin Gourves, Université Paris-Est Créteil
- Emelie Schultz, Copenhagen Business School

Moderator: Simona Gibalová, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice

12:30 – 14:00

Lunch Break

UDE Canteen, Lotharstraße 23-25 or U-Café, Lotharstraße 65

Workshops

14:00 – 15:30

Seizmic: Social Entrepreneurship Opportunities in Aurora (Kai Hockerts)

LA 011b (ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

14:00 – 15:30

Strategy for University Regional Stakeholders Engagement as a Part of Aurora's strategic Management (tbc)

LC 140 (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65

14:00 – 15:30

Aurorisation: Teaching Formats, Evaluation Tools, Accreditation and Recognition (Christelle Garrouste, Bertille Baron)

LK 052 (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65



Plenary Session



Closed Workshop





Open Workshop / Session


PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 20 May
UDE Campus Duisburg

14:00 – 14:45	VRE Meeting <i>LA 013 (ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
15:00 – 15:45	VRR Meeting <i>LA 013 (ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
16:00 – 16:45	Joint VRE-VRR <i>LA 013 (ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break <i>Foyer, LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Workshops The LOUIS Methodology: Redesigning Teaching (Marco Biondi, Francesca Scamardella) <i>LC 140 tba (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65</i> Aurora Impact Study – Next Steps: Workshop on the Development of a Common Impact Assessment Methodology and Monitoring (Ilyas Kenadid, Matthieu Danteny) <i>LA 011b (ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Aurora Blended Intensive Programmes – From Concept to Implementation (Nanna Teitsdóttir, Marina Vives) <i>LK 052 (ground floor), LK Building Lotharstraße 65</i>
17:00 – 18:00	ICs and WP Leads Meeting <i>LA 013 (ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65</i>
19:00 – 23:00	10th Year Anniversary party and Handover of the Flag 19:00 Arrival and Welcome 19:30 Handover of the Flag, Start of the Reception <i>Restaurant HOME, Calaisplatz 5</i>

 Closed Session

 Open Workshop / Session

 Closed Workshop

 Group Session

PROGRAMME

Thursday, 21 May
UDE Campus Duisburg

8:30 – 11:30

Coordination Committee Meeting – Two Years Extension
LF 156 (1st floor) LF Building, Lotharstraße 65

Workshops

The Role of Open Science and Citizen Science in AI and Innovation
(Roberto Delle Donne, Maria Helena Cruz de Carvalho)
LK 052 (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65

9:00 – 12:00

Aurora Community of Practice: Bibliometrics & Open Research Information
(Eike Spielberg, Maurice Vanderfeesten)
LK132 (1st floor), Lotharstraße 65

Digital Credentials: From Strategy to Implementation using EDCI
(Dejan Lukovic)
LA011b, (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65

From Idea to Implementation: Building (cross-hub joint) Aurora Micro-credentials
(Christina Raab, Florian Freitag, Robert Steiger)
LK051 (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch Break (self-organized)

14:00 – 16:00

Workshops

Digital Credentials: From Strategy to Implementation using EDCI
(Dejan Lukovic)
LA011b, (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65

Aurora Student Ambassador Peer-to-peer Learning Workshop
(TT 7.2 Aurora Student Community) (Niels Hexspoor)

LK 051, (ground floor), Lotharstraße 65



Closed Session



Closed Workshop



SESSIONS

OPENING CEREMONY

18 May 2026, 17:00 – 19:00 (CET)
Duisburg Campus (Lotharstraße 65)

OPENING SPEECHES



Prof. Barbara Albert
University of Duisburg-Essen



Dr. Ramon Puras
Aurora Secretary General

HANDOVER OF AURORA PRESIDENCY



Prof. Veronika Sexl
Universität Innsbruck



Dr. Margrethe Jonkman
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

OPENING CEREMONY

Monday 18 May

Duisburg Campus (Lotharstraße 65)

KEYNOTE SPEECH

17:00 – 19:00 (CET)



Dr. Mai Thi Nguyen-Kim
Chemist and Science
Journalist

RECEPTION WITH LIGHT BITES & DRINKS

19:00 – 20:00 (CET)



Prof. Karen Shire
University of
Duisburg-Essen

PLENARY SESSION 1

Tuesday 19 May, 09:00 – 10:30 (CET)

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

THE EROSION OF TRUST IN ACADEMIA? RESPONSES FROM UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS IN EUROPE

The opening plenary session takes up whether and how public trust in academia is eroding, and what universities and research organisations can do to build and enhance trust in science. The plenary aims to locate the source of distrust in science and to explore solutions through improving science communication, promoting academic freedom and science diplomacy through international cooperation and social impact. The plenary brings together participants from Aurora partner universities, a social scientist engaged in research and outreach about trust in science and science communication, experts from the European Commission's DG Research and Innovation, and the DAAD Centre for International Academic Cooperation.



Prof. Laure Garrigue-Antar
Université Paris-Est Créteil



Prof. Marlene Altenmüller
Leibniz Institute for Psychology



Dr. Donato Sitaro
Università Federico II of
Naples



Dr. Catherine Letcher Lazo
German Academic Exchange Service
(DAAD)

PLENARY SESSION 1

Tuesday 19 May, 09:00 – 10:30 (CET)

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

THE EROSION OF TRUST IN ACADEMIA? RESPONSES FROM UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS IN EUROPE



Dr. Jan Marco Müller
European Commission



Dr. Julia Schwanholz
University of Duisburg-Essen

PLENARY SESSION 2

Tuesday 19 May, 11:00 – 12:00 (CET)

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

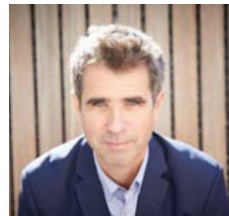
AURORA 2030 MIDWAY: ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES, AND THE ROAD AHEAD

At the midpoint of the Aurora 2030 journey, this plenary session reflects on the progress to date, highlights key challenges and considers the path ahead. The session brings together two presenters and a diverse panel of five Aurorans, representing both established and new voices within the network. The University of Sussex will be briefly introduced, followed by an interactive segment where participants can share their perspectives via Mentimeter, feeding into the panel discussion.

The session moderators are Alexander Lindemans (Aurora 2030 Programme Manager, Aurora Central Office) and Fanney Karlsdóttir (Institutional Coordinator, University of Iceland).



Prof. Janette Walde
Universität Innsbruck



Dr. Ramon Puras
Aurora Secretary General



Prof. Robin Banerjee
University of Sussex



Prof. Kai Hockers
Copenhagen Business School

PLENARY SESSION 2

Tuesday 19 May, 11:00 – 12:00 (CET)

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

AURORA 2030 MIDWAY: ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND THE ROAD AHEAD



Silvester Draaijer
VU Amsterdam



Eliška Karasová
Palacký University Olomouc



Fanney Karlsdóttir
University of Iceland



Alexander Lindemans
Aurora Central Office

Introduction to Sussex

Tuesday 19 May, 13:00 – 14:00 (CET)

LA 013 (Ground floor) LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

INTRODUCTION TO SUSSEX

This interactive session follows on from the recent formal affiliation of the University of Sussex as a strategic partner of Aurora. In the session, staff and students at Aurora universities will have the opportunity to explore and discuss key areas of alignment with Sussex's latest institutional strategy, Sussex 2035: Creating Progressive Futures. A particular focus will be placed on sharing ongoing work to promote sustainability, at the intersection of education and student life, world-leading research and innovation, and local community service and civic engagement.



Louise Turton

University of Sussex



Prof. Robin Banerjee

University of Sussex



Matt Montgomery

University of Sussex



Annie McEntee

University of Sussex

PLENARY SESSION 3

Wednesday 20 May, 09:00 – 10:30 (CET)

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

INNOPRENEURSHIP – FROM PEER REVIEW TO REVENUE

This 90-minute panel discussion explores the journey of transforming academic research and theoretical ‘papers’ into viable, revenue-generating ‘ventures’.

Chaired by Dr. Tomasz Waliczko (Aurora Alliance Coordinator), the session brings together a diverse group of experts – ranging from deep-tech professors to serial entrepreneurs – to bridge the gap between lab-bench innovation and market impact.

The conversation is structured into three thematic rounds:

Paper: focusing on the academic foundations, patenting and the integration of sustainability metrics during the research phase

Revenue: addressing the challenges of scaling, productising prototypes and balancing social missions with financial viability

Synergy: a collaborative reflection on how the relationship between universities and investors can be optimised to accelerate the ‘lab-to-market’ pipeline



Livia Zimermann

4x Entrepreneur &
Founder of EPITHEL



Prof. Hannes Rothe

University of Duisburg-Essen



Dana Pietralla

Co-Founder of paged & Cognitive
Science Researcher

PLENARY SESSION 3

Wednesday 20 May, 09:00 – 10:30 (CET)

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

INNOPRENEURSHIP – FROM PEER REVIEW TO REVENUE



Prof. Anne-Karen Hüske
Copenhagen Business School



Dr. Tomasz Waliczko
University of Duisburg-Essen

PLENARY SESSION 4

Wednesday 20 May, 11:00 – 12:30 (CET)

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

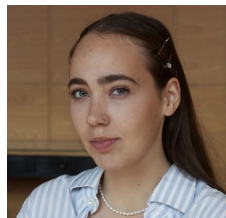
WINDOW INTO STUDENT REPRESENTATION

This a panel connects the past, present and future of student representation in the Aurora Alliance. We take staying connected very seriously and, for this reason, we have invited former members to the panel to speak on behalf of previous student representatives and to show that we have long been involved and interested in being represented and heard. The members active today are the voice of the current ASC and discuss ongoing initiatives such as SRC, CoC and Aurora Alumni, as well as their work in other European alliances, such as ESU, ESA and EUSAF, sharing and learning best practices for the future development of European higher education. Through this panel, we aim to present the life of student representatives and our ideas for the continuation of work that we consider important and meaningful.



Simona Gibalová

Pavol Jozef Šafárik University Košice



Alma Ágústsdóttir

University of Iceland



Eliška Karasová

Palacký University Olomouc

PLENARY SESSION 4

Wednesday 20 May, 11:00 – 12:30 (CET)

LA034 (Audimax, ground floor), LA Building, Lotharstraße 65

WINDOW INTO STUDENT REPRESENTATION



Erin Gourves
Université Paris-Est
Créteil



Emelie Schultz
Copenhagen Business School



WORKSHOPS, WORK PACKAGE & TASK TEAM MEETINGS

Workshops and Closed Sessions

Tuesday 19 May

UDE Campus Duisburg (Lotharstraße 65)

Parallel Workshop Sessions

Transdisciplinary European Research Driven Educational Hub (Barbara Buchenau)

The session will move WP2 from defining to operationalising “jointness,” focusing on joint educational formats and micro-credentials as key tools. Through short inputs, structured discussion and collective synthesis, participants will reflect on concrete experiences, align expectations across hubs, and agree on clear take-aways, priorities and next steps for upcoming WP2 activities.

14:00 – 16:00
LA 011b
(ground floor)

Enhancing Quality of Research through an AURORA Research and Innovation Community (Matthias Beekmann, Halldór Jónsson)

The meeting will review task team progress on COARA implementation, the Aurora 2026 research and education call, and development and use of the OpenAIRE platform. Participants will discuss next evaluation steps, how to create synergies between task teams, and plan upcoming deliverables, milestones, and possible adaptations for future calls.

14:00 – 16:00
**LR building/
Gerhard-
Mercator-Haus**
**(1st floor),
Lotharstraße 57**

Workshops and Closed Sessions

Tuesday 19 May

UDE Campus Duisburg (Lotharstraße 65)

Parallel Workshop Sessions

WP8 General Meeting (closed session for WP8 members) (Nanna Teitsdóttir, Marina Vives)

This closed session will bring together WP8 members and key implementers to critically review BIP implementation within Aurora, refine guidance from the BIP Handbook, and discuss administrative bottlenecks, timelines and division of labour. Participants will co-develop practical support measures and coordination mechanisms to scale high-quality Aurora BIPs strategically and sustainably.

15:00 – 16:00
LK 051

Workshops and Closed Sessions

Wednesday 20 May

UDE Campus Duisburg (Lotharstraße 65)

Parallel Workshop Sessions

Seizmic: Social Entrepreneurship Opportunities in Aurora (Kai Hockerts)

The session will raise awareness of MSCA Doctoral Networks and Seizmic activities (app, courses, awards) through testimonials, demonstrations and project presentations. It aims to increase student engagement in social entrepreneurship, showcase Seizmic award winners, share results from the Seizmic BIP staff week, and strengthen connections among Aurora students, educators, researchers and partners.

14:00 – 16:00
LA 011b
(ground floor)

Strategy for University Regional Stakeholders Engagement as a Part of Aurora's Strategic Management

The session will use in-person discussions to advance Aurora's Strategy for University Regional Stakeholder Engagement. Participants will review the draft strategy, align expectations with institutional leaders, share good practice examples (including from the host university), agree key priorities and next steps, and strengthen mutual understanding of institutional and regional perspectives.

14:00 – 15:30
LC 140

Workshops and Closed Sessions

Wednesday 20 May

UDE Campus Duisburg (Lotharstraße 65)

Parallel Workshop Sessions

Aurorisation: Teaching Formats, Evaluation Tools, Accreditation and Recognition (Christelle Garrouste, Bertille Baron)

This in-person open session will explain Aurorisation and the full life cycle of an Aurora educational activity, from design to accreditation and recognition. Through inputs and group work, participants will explore tools (LOUIS, Seizmic, BEVI), micro-credentials, national frameworks and ECTS recognition, leaving with practical guidelines, templates and collaboratively developed ideas.

14:00 – 15:30
LK 052

The LOUIS Methodology: Redesigning Teaching (Marco Biondi, Francesca Scamardella)

The session will gather researchers from diverse contexts to critically discuss and refine the Louis tool, exploring its pillars, features, and potential for new teaching trajectories in the age of AI. Participants will gain theoretical and practical instruments to reflect on their own teaching, supporting a more human-centred, socially responsible university.

16:00 – 17:00
LC 140

Workshops and Closed Sessions

Wednesday 20 May

UDE Campus Duisburg (Lotharstraße 65)

Parallel Workshop Sessions

Aurora Impact Study – Next Steps: Workshop on the Development of a Common Impact Assessment Methodology and Monitoring

(Ilyas Kenadid, Matthieu Danteny)

The session will present and discuss the alliance's first economic impact study and its methodology, map key impact dimensions (political, societal, economic, scientific, enabling), and explore how to coordinate them into a coherent impact framework. Using presentations, discussions and mini-focus groups, 15–20 impact experts from across work packages will participate.

16:00 – 17:00
LA 011b
(ground floor)

Aurora Blended Intensive Programmes – From Concept to Implementation

(Nanna Teitsdóttir, Marina Vives)

The open workshop will introduce the Aurora BIP Handbook, explain what defines an Aurora BIP, and clarify Erasmus+ requirements, funding and workload sharing. Through case examples, discussion and Q&A, participants will explore how to design and implement BIPs, address institutional challenges, and use BIPs strategically to advance Aurora 2030 mobility and collaboration goals.

16:00 – 17:00
LK 052

Workshops and Closed Sessions

Thursday 20 May

UDE Campus Duisburg (Lotharstraße 65)

Parallel Workshop Sessions

The Role of Open Science and Citizen Science in AI and Innovation

(Roberto Delle Donne, Maria Helena Cruz de Carvalho)

This final seminar will mark the transition from an online seminar cycle to a durable, in-person Aurora Open Science and Citizen Science community. Through a high-level roundtable, participants will consolidate the year's discussions, agree on shared priorities, and co-design future collaborative frameworks and initiatives across the Aurora network.

9:00 – 12:00
LK 052

Aurora Community of Practice: Bibliometrics & Open Research Information

(Eike Spielberg, Maurice Vanderfeesten)

The session will create an Aurora Community of Practice for bibliometrics and Open Research Information, transforming fragmented expertise into a coordinated network. Participants will define governance, map tools and infrastructures, align methodological standards, and agree a 2026–2027 roadmap, including a pilot study on gender balance in publication cultures to support responsible research assessment.

9:00 – 12:00
LK 132

Workshops and Closed Sessions

Thursday 20 May

UDE Campus Duisburg (Lotharstraße 65)

Parallel Workshop Sessions

Digital Credentials: From Strategy to Implementation using EDCI (Dejan Lukovic)

This full-day hybrid workshop will move Aurora from conceptual discussion to coordinated implementation of Digital Credentials. Grounded in ELM and EDCI, participants will map institutional readiness, align standards, co-design interoperable credential templates, agree on a shared roadmap, and issue a pilot Digital Credential to attendees as a concrete, replicable reference case.

9:00 – 12:00
12:00 – 14:00
LA 011b
(ground floor),

From Idea to Implementation: Building (cross-hub joint) Aurora micro-credentials (Christina Raab, Florian Freitag, Robert Steiger)

This hands-on workshop will bring together teachers and enablers from the “Sustainability & Climate Change” and “Culture: Diversities & Identities” hubs to co-design at least one cross-hub Aurora micro-credential. Participants will define content, formats, ECTS structure, issuing and workflow model, and agree a concrete implementation roadmap for 2026/27.

9:00 – 12:00
LK 061

Workshops and Closed Sessions

Thursday 20 May

UDE Campus Duisburg (Lotharstraße 65)

Parallel Workshop Sessions

Aurora Student Ambassador Peer-to-peer Learning Workshop (TT 7.2 Aurora Student Community) (Niels Hexspoor)

In Duisburg, Aurora Student Ambassadors will meet in person to exchange best practices on peer-to-peer learning, co-create an action plan for local activities, and develop replicable activity formats. The interactive session will strengthen collaboration, build facilitation skills, and ensure sustained impact within the Aurora Student Community beyond the meeting.

14:00 – 16:00
LK 051



SPEAKERS

SPEAKERS



Alma Ágústsdóttir

graduated with a Master's in Translation Studies from the University of Iceland. She was President of the Aurora Student Council from 2021 to 2023, prioritising the longevity and institutional memory of the Council, and integrating student representation into Aurora 2030. She now works at the International Division at the University of Iceland and leads Task Team 7.1 – Coordination of Student Support Services and Engagement.



Barbara Albert

Professor Barbara Albert serves as Rector of University of Duisburg-Essen. She is a distinguished expert in the field of solid-state chemistry, former president of the German Chemical Society and member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Prior to joining University of Duisburg-Essen, she held professorships at the universities of Hamburg and Darmstadt. At Technical University of Darmstadt, she also was Dean of the Department of Chemistry and Vice President of Research and Early Careers.

SPEAKERS

Marlene Altenmüller



is a junior professor and head of the Science Reception Lab at the Leibniz Institute for Psychology (ZPID) in Germany. Her work investigates how laypeople - but also researchers - view science, putting a particular focus on trust (with)in science. She further links this research to art reception and the museum experience as well as to social justice perspectives, asking how different people in different contexts perceive, understand and accept or reject science and its role in society. Marlene Altenmüller holds degrees in psychology and art history from the University of Marburg and obtained her PhD in social psychology on the topic of 'Trust in Science' at LMU Munich.

Robin Banerjee



is Professor of Developmental Psychology and the inaugural Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global and Civic Engagement at University of Sussex. Formerly Head of the School of Psychology, his research focuses on the social and emotional development of young people, and he works closely with practitioners and policymakers in the areas of education and mental health. In his current role as Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Robin is the University's strategic lead for global and civic engagement, establishing and strengthening institutional relationships with stakeholders and partner organisations in the local community as well as internationally.

SPEAKERS



Silvester Draaijer

is a Programme Manager at the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, where he focuses on innovation in education. He also serves as WP2 co-lead, and is the leader of Aurora's Digital Society and Global Citizenship Hub. His expertise includes blended learning, active learning, AI, and computer-based testing and assessment.



Laure Garrigue-Antar

Laure Garrigue-Antar has been a Full Professor at University Paris-Est Créteil (UPEC) since 2009. She is a biochemist and her work aims at understanding the impact of emerging environmental micropollutants on water quality, human and ecosystems health.

Appointed UPEC Open Science delegate in 2022 and Vice-Rector for Science and Society in October 2025, she coordinates initiatives to promote high-quality research, data transparency and open access to publications. She also develops the 'Science with and for Society' strategy, raising awareness about research dissemination and supporting PhD students and academic staff in science communication. She also contributes to initiatives addressing research challenges by engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including the university community, students, businesses, institutional and local stakeholders, and the general public.

SPEAKERS



Simona Gibalová

is a fourth-year General Medicine student at Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice. As current President of the Aurora Student Council 2025/2026, she leverages her extensive experience ranging from collaboration on creating the Aurora Students' Rights Charter to representing Aurora in the European Student Union. Simona brings a unique perspective from an Aurora Associate Partner university to the ASC board for the first time.



Erin Gourves

is a double master's student in Conflict Studies and Global Politics, currently completing her first year at St. Paul University in Ottawa, Canada. She serves as an Assessor for International Affairs at the Université Paris-Est Créteil (UPEC) and represents her university as a member of the Aurora Student Council. She is committed to promoting student inclusion and a cross-border student community.

SPEAKERS

Kai Hockerts



is a Professor of Social Entrepreneurship at Copenhagen Business School (CBS), where he also serves as Academic Coordinator for the Aurora Alliance. His research focuses on corporate sustainability, social entrepreneurship and impact investing. Prior to CBS, he was an Adjunct Professor at INSEAD.

Holding a PhD from the University of St. Gallen, Kai is a widely published scholar in leading journals such as the Journal of Business Venturing and the Journal of Business Ethics. He also serves as a section editor and editorial board member for several prominent academic publication venues in his field.

Anne-Karen Hueske



is an Assistant Professor at Copenhagen Business School. Her research focuses on sustainability transformation of and through business, with a particular emphasis on social entrepreneurship, sustainable innovation implementation and responsible management education. She earned her PhD at Dresden University of Technology and was founding managing director of PRISMA – Centre for Sustainability Assessment and Policy. She is CBS's Institutional Coordinator and academic co-lead on social entrepreneurship education within Aurora universities and MSCA DN seismic.

SPEAKERS

Margrethe Jonkman



has served as the President of the Executive Board of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam since November 2023. A scientist by training, she earned her PhD in Food Science and Technology from Wageningen University before embarking on a distinguished 25-year career at Friesland Campina, where she eventually rose to the position of Chief Technology Officer. In her leadership role at VU Amsterdam, she focuses on bridging the gap between scientific research and societal impact, with a strong emphasis on sustainability, diversity and multidisciplinary innovation.

SPEAKERS

Eliška Karasová



is currently serving as Vice President of the ASC for the 2025/2026 term while studying War and Peace Studies and European Studies at Palacký University Olomouc. She had the opportunity to represent her university and country in various international settings, including Erasmus exchanges and collaborative programmes. Eliška enjoys working on projects that bring people together and create space for meaningful dialogue. She has also helped organise events and initiatives that connect students across borders. This year, Eliška is set to represent Aurora at the European Student Assembly in Strasbourg and the European Student Ambassador Forum in Warsaw.

Fanney Karlsdóttir



has served as the Aurora Institutional Coordinator at the University of Iceland since 2022. She leads the UI Aurora team, which consists of three employees and focuses primarily on facilitating student and staff engagement within Aurora. Fanney holds an undergraduate degree from UI in Anthropology and an MA in International Studies from the University of Queensland. Her professional background includes various roles in the public and private sectors, specialising in sustainable development and project management.

SPEAKERS

Catherine Letcher Lazo



earned her PhD at the University of Bonn and currently serves as Head of Department at the DAAD Centre for International Academic Cooperation (well-known in Germany under its abbreviation KIWi). In this capacity, she is very well versed in science diplomacy and science communication.

Alexander Lindemans



is Programme Manager of Aurora. Originally from the Brussels region of Belgium, he holds a BA and MA in History from Ghent University and Charles University in Prague, and an MA in European Studies from the University of Amsterdam. He has worked in international education for a while, in various roles at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

SPEAKERS

Annie McEntee



is the Wellbeing Officer at the University of Sussex Students' Union in Brighton. Originally from Ireland, she completed a Bachelor's degree in Law at the University of Sussex, spending a year abroad at Uppsala University in Sweden where she really enjoyed learning more about the student movement in Europe. She now represents the students at Sussex and is very excited to learn and share ideas about how to improve students' lives and empower them to stand up for themselves and make the most out of their University education.

Matt Montgomery



is the Head of Sustainability at the University of Sussex, where he leads the strategic delivery of the 'Sustainable Sussex' programme. His work centres on implementing the university's ambitious goal to become one of the most sustainable higher education institutions in the world, with a primary focus on achieving net-zero emissions. He oversees a wide range of initiatives, from large-scale decarbonisation and campus infrastructure improvements to developing policies for sustainable procurement and travel. In addition to operational management, he plays a key role in fostering student-led innovation and works to integrate environmental accountability across all levels of the university's research and professional activities.

SPEAKERS

Jan Marco Müller



Following his PhD in Geography at the University of Marburg (Germany), Jan Marco Müller's early career included management positions at environmental research centres in Germany, Italy and the UK. After being an Assistant to the Director-General of the Joint Research Centre (JRC; 2009–2012), he managed the office of Dame Anne Glover, the first Chief Scientific Adviser to the President of the European Commission (2012–2015), and then helped set up the Commission's current Scientific Advice Mechanism. From 2017 to 2020, he worked for the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) as Coordinator for Science Diplomacy and acting Chief Operations Officer. From 2020 to 2022, he served as Science & Technology Advisor of the European External Action Service (EEAS), before joining the European Commission's DG Research and Innovation, where he coordinates the development of a European Framework for Science Diplomacy. He is a Fellow of the International Science Council and currently chairs the global Foreign Ministries Science & Technology Advice Network (FMSTAN).

SPEAKERS

Dr. Mai Thi Nguyen-Kim



Dr. Mai Thi Nguyen-Kim is the holder of a doctorate in chemistry as well as a science journalist and author. She initially gained popularity in 2020 through her mailab channel (produced by funk, the German public broadcasters' network for youths). That year, her video 'Corona geht gerade erst los' (Covid is just getting started) was the most viewed YouTube video in Germany. Now numbering over 1.5 million subscribers, the YouTube channel has been renamed MAITHINK X and features topical videos to accompany her science programme MAITHINK X – Die Show, which has been running on the German TV channel ZDFneo since 2021. This year, her show won the Grimme-Preis, Germany's most prestigious media award, in the entertainment category.

She hosted the TV show Quarks on the WDR channel from 2018 to 2021 before moving to the ZDF network where, in addition to her own show, she appears regularly in the Terra X documentaries. Her recent projects include documentaries entitled Vietnam and Chemie des Kochens (the chemistry of cooking), available for streaming on ZDF. While Vietnam explores the country from a variety of perspectives, Chemie des Kochens focuses on the interplay between science and cooking.

SPEAKERS

Dr. Mai Thi Nguyen-Kim

Mai Thi Nguyen-Kim also presented the third season (following a 12-year hiatus) of Nicht nachmachen! (Don't try this at home!) together with Lutz van der Horst and Fabian Köster, carrying out dangerous experiments in four new episodes.

After the publication of her book Die kleinste gemeinsame Wirklichkeit (the smallest common reality), published by Droemer Knauer, the fourth book in her children's series BIBIBIBER HAT DA MAL 'NE FRAGE (Bibibiber has a question), published by Oetinger Verlag, came out in October 2025. In this innovative non-fiction series for children, she and author Marie Meimberg take the whole family into a world where science is explored in an exciting way. This series is also available as audiobooks with soundtracks.

Her work has earned her numerous awards (including the Hanns-Joachim-Friedrichs-Preis, the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Grimme-Preis and the Nannen-Preis). Mai Thi Nguyen-Kim also plays an active role in various scientific institutions, currently serving on the Senate of the Max Planck Society, the advisory board of the Deutsche Telekom Stiftung foundation and the supervisory board of the Science Media Center Germany gGmbH.

SPEAKERS

Dana Pietralla



is co-founder of paged, a social-tech startup fostering inclusion of neurodiverse people in the digital space. During her studies she was involved in various research projects in the area of cognitive science, e.g. at University of California, Berkeley and New York University. With this background, she now devotes all her passion to paged, developing different AI and tech solutions to enable companies to make their digital content more accessible to neurodiverse people. She also works as a speaker and consultant.

Thanks to her commitment, Dana has been selected as a Voice of Economic Transformation by the Bertelsmann Stiftung.

Ramon Puras



is the Secretary General of Aurora. In this role, he leads strategic initiatives that enhance transnational collaboration, institutional development and higher education policy alignment at the European level. Before joining Aurora, Ramón held several leadership positions in Dutch higher education, including serving as Dean at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Vice-Dean at Amsterdam University College, where he played a key role in strengthening interdisciplinary education, global engagement and academic innovation. Ramón holds a PhD in Biochemistry and his passion for teaching the interdisciplinary course Gastronomy, the Art and Science of Cooking, reflects his blend of interests in science, cooking and education.

SPEAKERS

Hannes Rothe



is a Professor and holds the Chair of Sustainability and Innovation in Digital Ecosystems at the University of Duisburg-Essen, and is head of Place Beyond Bytes. He teaches Digital Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Machine Learning. His research focuses on digital innovation, entrepreneurship, and data and knowledge in digital ecosystems, with publications in leading journals such as Information Systems Research and the Strategic Management Journal. He has received multiple awards, including the Claudio Ciborra Award (2019). He actively mentors deep-tech ventures and co-founded the Digital Entrepreneurship Hub at Freie Universität Berlin. Previously, he held positions at ICN Business School and Freie Universität Berlin and was a visiting researcher at the University of Cambridge and TU Graz.

Emelie Schultz



is a Swedish master's student in People and Business Development and the CEMS Master in International Management at Copenhagen Business School in Denmark. Last year, she graduated with a dual degree in Business Management and Psychology from the University of Oklahoma in the United States. As an Aurora Student Council Representative, Emelie is very grateful to be working together with the alliance to enhance Aurora's mission and amplify student voices at local, national, and European levels. Emelie is a current representative for Aurora at FOREU4ALL.

SPEAKERS

Julia Schwanholz



is a political scientist, senior lecturer, and Vice Dean for Digitalization at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Duisburg-Essen. Her research interests include democratic legitimacy in the digital age, parliamentary studies and voter turnout. In her bi-weekly *Politischer Pausen Podcast*, she brings together scholars, political practitioners, journalists and civil society representatives in order to make political science research accessible to a broader audience and wider public.

Karen Shire



holds the chair for Comparative Sociology and Japanese Society and is currently Vice Rector for University Culture, Diversity and International Affairs at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Her research is broadly focused on the comparative-historical study of work and organizational changes, how these shape transformations of employment and labor relations, as well as their consequences for social inequalities. Her research interests include the emergence of cross-border labor markets in Europe and the Asia-Pacific, the employment dynamics of welfare markets, gender regimes in historical and comparative perspective and the political economy of human trafficking. Karen Shire held the post of director for both the Institute of East Asian Studies and the Essen College of Gender Research in the past.

SPEAKERS

Donato Sitaro



is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Medieval History at the University of Naples Federico II. He previously earned his PhD from the same institution with a thesis focusing on Western British ethnic identity in the Early Medieval period. A former research fellow at the University of Tübingen (2024), his work explores cultural and trade contacts along the Atlantic seaboard and the 19th-century historiography of the Migration Period. Within the Aurora Alliance framework, he operates in Task Team 10.2 (Open Science and Citizen Science), where he coordinates research seminars and workshops. In this role, he works to link his expertise in historical identities and cultural encounters with the broader frameworks of participatory research and societal involvement in European societies and beyond.

Louise Turton



Louise Turton is a Global Partnerships Manager within the Global Engagement office at the University of Sussex. Her work is central to developing and managing the university's international academic and research collaborations. She oversees key strategic initiatives, such as the European Partnership Development Fellowship (EPDF) scheme and the Mahidol Sussex Seed Fund, which facilitate joint projects between Sussex and its global partners. Louise plays a vital role in coordinating international visits, articulation degrees and virtual collaboration solutions aimed at strengthening the university's global presence and fostering multidisciplinary research to address global challenges.

SPEAKERS

Janette Walde



is a Professor of Statistics at the Department of Statistics and currently the Vice Rector for Teaching and Students at the Universität Innsbruck. Depending on the research group she is working with, she evaluates the causal effects of policy measures, analyses preferences for support of mega sports events, models the seasonality of winter tourism demand or identifies risk factors for multiple sclerosis. Thus, she works in highly interdisciplinary teams. As Vice Rector, her agenda focuses on strengthening education quality, promoting student-centered learning and advancing the digitalisation of education.

Tomasz Waliczko



is a researcher and innovation professional working at the intersection of sustainability, digital entrepreneurship, and international collaboration. He works as Aurora Alliance Coordinator at the University of Duisburg-Essen, guiding strategic cooperation and mobility across European universities. Previously, he led the Place Beyond Bytes incubator, mentoring teams to turn ideas into ventures. He teaches Sustainable Digital Entrepreneurship and Moonshot Innovation. With experience in Berlin's startup ecosystem, he has built cross-border projects linking Eastern Europe and North Africa and collaborated with industry leaders such as Haniel and ThyssenKrupp. He contributes to initiatives like p2i: In Action (in collaboration with the University of Cambridge) and coordinates the Ruhr Fellowship Programme.

SPEAKERS

Livia Zimmermann



is the founder of EPITHEL, building the first patent-backed skincare system for intimate skin longevity. Before EPITHEL, Livia spent 15 years launching over 200 consumer products and 3 other ventures across Brazil and Germany. She is currently Entrepreneur in Residence at Carbon 13, one of Europe's most active climate tech investors, and leads Blue Factory, ESCP Business School's entrepreneurship centre in Germany, where she supports a network of 88,000+ founders and innovators across Europe. Education: M.Sc. from TU Berlin, with executive studies at Stanford (AI) and Central Saint Martins. She is an alumna of Antler and Google Female Founders.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE AURORA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026