4 HigherED INDUSTRY

HigherED4Industry

Sustainable competitiveness in the twin transition through higher education staff acquisition – academia-industry collaboration and hybrid careers supporting experienced professionals in accessing the teaching and research professions in HE in Europe.

Peer Learning for Academia-Industry Collaboration

Larnaca, Cyprus

12th-13th November

The HigherED4Industry project, titled *Sustainable Competitiveness in the Twin Transition through Higher Education Staff Acquisition – Academia-Industry Collaboration and Hybrid Careers*, had its **first Peer Learning Activity** at the **University of Central Lancashire Cyprus (UCLan Cyprus) campus** in Larnaca, Cyprus on November 12th and 13th 2024. This project focuses on supporting industry professionals in accessing teaching and research roles in higher education institutions in Europe. It also aims to foster collaboration between industry and academia.

The purpose of this first event was to explore existing frameworks and practices that address staff shortages in higher education and promote collaboration. Participants engaged in panel and group discussions and the sharing of good practices. The PLA also featured testimonials from UCLan Cyprus heads of school, teachers, alumni and students, as well as a campus visit, providing valuable insights into Cypriot case. The PLA was a success, fostering dialogue and innovation and being the first step towards **strengthening academia-industry synergies across Europe**.

Co-funded by the European Union

Tuesday, November 12, 2024

The opening day of the PLA brought together academia and industry leaders to explore innovative collaboration strategies. Highlights included a roundtable discussion on "Hiring Practices and Competences," and presentations by OECD and the rector of Corvinus University, emphasizing the **importance of emotional intelligence, leadership skills, and induction programs** for fostering cooperation.

Key insights from participant discussions underscored the mutual **benefits** of such collaborations, including practical skill development, innovation, and knowledge-sharing. **Challenges** like mismatched priorities, legal barriers, and cultural differences were also discussed, with proposed solutions such as flexible academic terms, dual career pathways, and streamlined processes.

Case studies from Finland and Portugal highlighted **successful models** like Industrial PhDs and doctoral pilot programmes tailored to industry demands. These programmes demonstrated the value of integrating academic research with real-world applications, motivating students, and addressing barriers through structured agreements.

November 13, 2024

The second day of the PLA focused on the **Cypriot case**, while continuing the discussion on challenges and opportunities for collaboration. UCLan Cyprus heads of school and teachers emphasized aligning educational programs with industry demands through practical learning, digital competencies, and active student participation. Strategies like induction training for industry lecturers, academic recognition, and tailored curricula were highlighted as key to fostering sustainable partnerships.

Real-world tools such as internships, guest lectures, field trips, and case study challenges were presented as critical for bridging the gap between theory and practice. The day included UCLan Cyprus **alumni and student testimonials**, which reinforced the value of hands-on experiences in building career readiness and networking opportunities.

As a key takeaway from this PLA, the understanding emerged that fostering collaboration between academia and industry benefits all stakeholders: students gain practical skills, professionals gain reputation and access to research, and higher education institutions gain access to expertise and innovative ideas from the industry. To ensure the sustainability of these partnerships, it is essential to establish clear, supportive frameworks. Building on these ideas, we will continue to discuss them further in our **next Workshop in Helsinki, Finland on April 2nd and 3rd 2024.**

Co-funded by
the European Union