

LITHUANIAN – UNITED KINGDOM UNIVERSITIES COOPERATION IN LIFE SCIENCES

11.00-14.00 (GMT) 13.00-16.00 (EET)
March 8, 2022

BIO

MODERATOR:

Gintaras Steponavičius, during his 20 years in Parliament, he focused much of his energy on the reform of the Lithuanian educational system, and became Minister of Education in 2008, and steered through some of the most significant Higher Education reforms Lithuania has seen. Gintaras has become active in the past few years in working with governments in the wider region who are keen to reform their education systems. He stood down from Parliament in 2020 and has joined CCG to help us develop our activity across Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.

SPEAKERS:

Živilė Ruželė, PhD, was appointed as National Contact Point (NCP) for Health programmes of the Horizon Europe programme at the Research Council of Lithuania. She has an international experience in academic R&D field and has been working in the International Programmes Unit for the last 3 years with bilateral collaborations, such as, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, health related European co-fund programmes and other transnational initiatives. [LinkedIn](#)

Tomas Andrejauskas, EMBA, President and Board Member of Lithuanian Biotechnology Association (LBTA), a legal entity established in 2003 on the basis of Lithuanian Society of Biotechnologists. Currently LBTA unites companies developing and producing biotechnological products, providing services for life science sector, also Lithuanian universities and individual researchers actively participating in fundamental and applied science. Lithuanian biotechnology association (LBTA) goal is to facilitate Lithuanian biotechnology sector to solve global life quality and environmental challenges. Tomas is a founding partner and Development manager at Satimed, a private limited liability company engaged in plant biotechnology research and its application in medicine and healthcare.

Imran Haq, has an extensive background in scientific research working in genetics, biochemistry, biophysics, and drug discovery with a respiratory focus at major universities (University College London, University of Cambridge) and large pharmaceutical organisations (GlaxoSmithKline). Post academia, Imran has focused on accelerating the translation of life sciences technologies through commercial mechanisms and education. He has founded two successful start-up life science SMEs, Cellomatics Biosciences and The Sample Network and has worked for a UK government innovation organisation, The Medicines Discovery Catapult, to support the pharmaceutical sector.

Sian Thomas, Sian is International Director at The Skills Network. She is a specialist in transnational education and has a wide-ranging background in senior leadership in international vocational and HE pathway education, schools, awarding bodies and charitable organisations. Her work at The Skills Network is on using targeted online and blended learning solutions to drive education and workforce development across multiple sectors. She holds an MA in Development Education from UCL and has specialisms in sustainable education partnerships and a background in teaching, capacity building and leadership.

Virginijus Šikšnys studied chemistry at Vilnius University and obtained his Ph.D. from Moscow State University before returning to Vilnius where he moved through different research ranks at the Institute of Applied Enzymology/ Institute of Biotechnology. In 1994 he stayed as a visiting scientist in the lab of Prof. Robert Huber at Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry in Germany. Since 2002 he holds the position of Professor of Vilnius University and is the Chief scientist at the Institute of Biotechnology. Currently he holds a chair of distinguished professor at Vilnius University and serves as chairman of the board of Life Science Center of Vilnius University. His research on the CRISPR-Cas has had a major impact on the field. His studies of the Cas9 protein paved the way for development of novel tools for genome editing applications. He is a member of Academia Europaea, EMBO, Lithuania Academy of Sciences and Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters. His work has been recently recognised with numerous awards and prizes including the Kavli Prize.

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Indrė Klimantavičienė, the leader of Innovation and Technology Transfer Office at Vilnius University hospital Santaros Klinikos (VULSK). The department is responsible for VULSK partnerships building with science & research institutions and businesses for initiation and implementation of innovative projects, search for R&D project funding opportunities, science-business collaboration activities, technology transfer and IP valorization.

Steve Bevan, Deputy Head, School of Life Sciences, University of Lincoln. Steve Bevan graduated from the University of Portsmouth with first class honours in 1994 and subsequently obtained his PhD from the University of London in 1998, specialising in genetics. During his career, Steve has worked in various positions at St George, University of London, Cambridge. Currently combining research, teaching and management, Steve has held a number of roles at Lincoln including Director of Teaching and Learning for the School of Life Sciences, Acting Director of Undergraduate Medicine for the new Lincoln Medical School, sitting on Academic Board and being a member of the College of Science Management Team. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0490-6830>

David Cobham is a Principal Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy who has been teaching, researching and providing consultancy in Information Systems for over 35 years. Having originally graduated in Economics he completed postgraduate programmes in Mathematics (Kings College London) and Computer Science (City, University of London), then a PhD in Information Systems and Constructive Alignment in Higher Education. Throughout his career he has been a departmental leader holding the posts of Head of School/Department of Computer Science, Dean of Faculty and Head of College of Science and more recently Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Global Engagement at the University of Lincoln. In recent years he has been at the forefront of designing innovative programmes in Trans-National Education and has published in journals, book chapters and presented at conferences in the UK and overseas on these topics. Amongst his publications is the core university text book “Business Information Systems: Analysis Design and Practice”, which has run to six editions, has been reprinted and translated and has over 500 citations recorded on Google Scholar. <https://staff.lincoln.ac.uk/dcobham>

Laurynas Jarukas, Head of Development department is an experienced innovation enthusiast with pharmaceutical background, currently working across [Lithuanian University of Health Sciences](#) development areas but has a particular focus on research funding management: funding and contracts, governance, ethics and assurance, innovation and engagement, strategy and policy. Laurynas also a strategy expert, consultant for technology and knowledge transfer and sponsored research development across a broad range of sectors including healthcare, MEDtech, pharmaceutical and Biotech.

Tom Evans, Professor of Molecular Microbiology, Institute of Infection, Immunity & Inflammation, University of Glasgow <https://www.gla.ac.uk/researchinstitutes/iii/staff/tomevans/>

Julija Kravčenko, Technology Transfer Project Manager at [Kaunas University of Technology](#), working in bridging cooperation between research and business, including development and convey of technologies acknowledged at the international level, consulting companies about European funds for innovative projects and to find solutions for daily problems in manufacturing and technology development, as well as foster and dissemination of entrepreneurship and innovation culture. Working in the fields of automation and robotics, biomedical technologies, ultrasound technologies, optics and data analytics and artificial intelligence.

Dr Philipp Seib, Reader, University of Strathclyde. Philipp obtained his BPharm and MSc from King's College London and completed his pharmacy pre-registration training at the Oxford University Hospitals. He received a PhD in drug delivery from Cardiff University (2005) before undertaking postdoctoral research at the Technical University Dresden (Germany) and Tufts University (Boston, USA). He subsequently moved to the University of Strathclyde's Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences where he is a Reader in Pharmaceutical Materials. www.SeibLab.com; www.strath.ac.uk/staff/seibphilippdr/

Kylie Cowan, Kylie Cowan is Head of Student Recruitment and International Development at the University of Strathclyde's Faculty of Science. She is responsible for leading student recruitment across the Faculty and developing partnerships with overseas universities. A chartered marketer, Kylie has worked in higher education marketing and student recruitment for almost 20 years. She joined the University of Strathclyde in 2019, having previously held positions at the universities of Newcastle, Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

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Aelita Skarbalienė, PhD, associate professor, and a senior researcher at the Faculty of Health Sciences, [Klaipeda University](#), and a member of the Lithuanian National Health Council. She has experience in creating and developing international research teams and currently is a lead or a co-lead in several international research groups. She specializes in health care quality issues and psychosocial healthcare aspects (leadership, emotional intelligence, communication, etc.) and the effects of different treatments on a person's psychosocial state. Promoting interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral cooperation in research is also in her interest.

Brad MacKay, Vice-Principal (International Strategy and External Relations), University of St Andrews. Brad MacKay is Professor of Strategy in the University of St Andrews School of Management. Formerly, he held a Chair in Strategic Management at the University of Edinburgh Business School, where he was also Director of Engagement on the Executive Team (2014-2016), Head of the Strategy and International Business Department (2011-2014), and Director of the MBA programs (2009-2011). He also held an ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) Senior Fellowship in the Future of the UK and Scotland program (2013-2014). He earned a BA in International Development Studies from Dalhousie University, in Halifax, Canada, an MLitt (with Distinction) in Management, Economics and Politics (MEP) and a PhD in Strategy from the University of St Andrews, Scotland. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA).

Tomas Venskūnas, Associate Professor at the [Lithuanian Sports University](#) with BSc in Training technologies and MSc in Exercise physiology and PhD in Sports Cardiology. Since 2006 through research work at Lithuanian Sports University collaborates strongly with UK, Swedish and Australian researchers on genetic and molecular mechanisms of skeletal muscle adaptations.

Dr Meng Zhang, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Sciences in Northumbria University. She is currently co-lead in the Living Construction research group in Hub for Biotechnology in the Built Environment. Her research focuses on applying microbial biotechnology to the built environment, particularly in the living construction which aim to develop design methods and processes which embrace the complexity of biological systems and digital fabrication. The key to her research is seeing growth as a manufacturing process, producing materials' properties which are enhanced as a result of the use of these biological system through sensing, responsive of living cells.

Saulius Mickevičius – PhD (Physics), professor, Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Vytautas Magnus University. He has an experience working on research and innovation projects together with business companies in fields of biogas production and waste management. Research interest area covers sustainable development, alternative energetics and biotechnology.

Vaidotas Vaišis, Director of Science and Research Office, at [Vilnius Tech](#) University with master qualification of environmental engineering at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University. In 2005 he defended PhD thesis on remediation of oil spills using natural sorbents. He is a researcher at Environmental protection institute, in 2010 he gained assoc. prof. of Technological Sciences, Environmental Engineering and Landscape Management.

Jo Frost is one of the UK [National Contact Points \(NCPs\)](#) for Horizon Europe funding for Health. The network of NCPs (in the UK, Lithuania and other countries) provide guidance, practical information and assistance on all aspects of participation in Horizon Europe. You can sign up for UK NCP newsletters on Horizon Europe health funding and policy [here](#). Jo is based at Innovate UK, part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). You can [connect with/follow Jo](#) on LinkedIn and follow the [UK Health NCPs on twitter](#).

Carolyn Johnson, (PhD), is a Programme Manager for the Infections and Immunity Board at the Medical Research Council, part of UK Research and Innovation (MRC UKRI). Carolyn's patch covers bacterial disease, fungal disease, and antimicrobial resistance.

ORGANIZERS

Miglė Masaitytė is a science and innovation officer for the Baltic States at the British Embassy Vilnius since 2018. Miglė is a member of the UK science and innovation network, which has approximately 100 officers in over 40 countries and territories around the world building partnerships and collaborations on science and innovation. She works with the Baltic science and innovation community in support of UK policy overseas, leading to mutual benefits to the UK and the Baltic States. Prior to this role Miglė has served as

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environment expert at the Lithuanian Ministry of Environment. During 2012-2013 she was attaché for environment at the Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the European Union. Migle holds a master's degree in natural sciences (geography) from Vilnius University.

Sigita Auvertin (Bagdonienė) is the National Contact Point (NCP) for Health programmes of the Horizon Europe programme at the Research Council of Lithuania. Sigita has experience in European affairs, for more than a decade she was working as the policy advisor in European Parliament (ENVI, ITRE, FEMM committees) with the specialization on consumers' rights, health and health literacy. She was working in European NGO European Cervical Cancer Association as political communication officer. Sigita was a lector on "Interests representation in the EU" (IIRPS VU, Lithuania). As the researcher, she was involved in the project CINEFOGO, participated in the project mEducator. From 2019 volunteering as policy advisor in the patient, group NGO ELIPE (Lithuania). [LinkedIn](#)

Julija Baniukevič is the RDI Policy Analyst in the Lithuanian RDI Liaison Office in Brussels - LINO, as well she is a Co-Chair of IGLO Higher Education Working Group. Previously she was the Executive Director of the Lithuanian Future Foresight Institute, as well as the Head of Lithuanian "Youth Researcher" Laboratory funded by Structural Funds. The laboratory led by Julija has participated in the EC funded FP7 project "NanOpinion" on the monitoring public opinion on nanotechnology. While completing her research studies at Vilnius University, Julija was actively involved in the science-policy environment at the national and international level. In addition, Julija was the President of the Lithuanian Society of Young Researchers and was elected as the vice-president of EURODOC community. Julija has graduated in the fields of biochemistry and bioengineering (master degree with honours). [LinkedIn](#)

Laura Pėkienė is the National Contact Point (NCP) for Missions: Cancer, Climate change and Oceans. She has an accomplished 20-year project management experience and has served as independent project evaluator at European Social Fund Agency and Department of Youth Affairs. With masters in International Law and Public Health Management she has been working closely with local and international stakeholders from public sector, SMEs and local businesses, municipalities and local communities. Her recent experience includes Horizon2020 and Horizon Europe project initiation and management in the hospitals of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences – Kauno Klinikos and Kaunas Hospital, while collaborating with academic and business organizations from EU, UK, US, Israel, Switzerland etc. Her academic involvement incorporates Legal basics, Intellectual property and Patient safety courses at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences. [LinkedIn](#)

Vytenis Fuks, Project manager for Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia at the Cormack Consultancy Group (CCG), which has been working with universities on the development of their international strategy and activity for more than 20 years. Vytenis recently defended his bachelor's thesis on the social effects on the rural community at the Institute of International Relations and Political Sciences (Vilnius University) and now is pursuing his master's degree in the field of Public Policy analysis. He became a part of the CCG team in April 2021.