

Panelists:

- + JAKOB CALICE, Austria’s Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD)
- + JULIA LINDER, Competence Centre for International Academic Collaborations (KIWi), DAAD
- + EDITH LITTICH, Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU)
- + WOLFGANG LUTZ, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)

Moderator:

- + IRINA FERENCZ, Academic Cooperation Association (ACA)

Ferencz moderates a Panel Discussion on the topic of ‘*We must never stop talking to each other*’ – a discussion on internationalisation between trust, knowledge, diplomacy and ‘red lines’ amidst geopolitical crises, as well as health and environmental crises, that give pause to reflect on paradigms in response to these crises. Ferencz introduces the panelists whose short biographies can be found [here](#). Input statements by the panelists are made, including responses to follow-up questions by the moderator:

- **Calice** (OeAD) acknowledges that much was said by the keynote speaker. However, when we look at OeAD funding of, and support for, Eastern and Southeastern European programmes for instance, politically induced focal points are apparent. The OeAD wears multiple hats, acting as bridgebuilder and implementer of strategies and funding imperatives; Erasmus+ exemplifies a such programme driven by a political agenda. With the current geopolitical situation(s), questions arise such as whether to support Russian students and researchers. Internationalisation is, without a doubt, used as a tool, and the resilience learned and acquired in challenging situations such as the recent pandemic years can guide us in establishing future guidelines.
- **Linder** (DAAD), in response to what KIWi should focus on moving forward given its rationale to support German Higher Education institutions and its cooperations, observes that multiple aspects make collaborations complex, including worries over data transfer, security risks and the like. We must understand geopolitical and social frameworks and explore how cooperations can be maintained while not exceeding these frameworks. KIWi supports Higher Education stakeholders position themselves in volatile geopolitical settings, including risk assessment and mitigation on both an institutional as well as personal level.
- **Littich** (Vienna University of Economics and Business) is depicted as the institutional voice on the panel and is asked whether a transformation of institutional strategies can be seen, and which challenges arise. She proposes a reflection on the genealogy of internationalisation: *Wherein lie our roots? Why was internationalisation created? What were current events that shaped internationalisation as a tool to open up globally?* In hindsight, given current events, we might observe misjudgement; however, personally she would not discount positive effects that internationalisation has had (e.g., student mobilities, support provided, teaching collaborations, etc.). Simultaneously, the world has changed, which warrants acknowledgement and entails a reevaluation of international collaborations from a supply-demand perspective. She advocates for a ‘differentiated risk assessment’, for example from a life science perspective evaluating the extent of global health problems being addressed, or from an economic perspective ensuring students are nurtured to become responsible world leaders.
- **Lutz** (IIASA) in the recently released ‘Vienna Statement’ advocated for fully open collaborations and is asked to assess whether this constitutes a naïve approach. He juxtaposes the majority of discussions, which he depicts as short- or mid-term focussed, with changes and trends that require long-term perspectives such as environmental issues. Dialogue needs to occur between researchers and policy makers because, on a temporal horizon, time is running out (e.g., meeting the Paris climate goals). This does not mean we need to be naïve in day-to-day collaborations; however, a differentiation between ‘essential’ and ‘non-essential’ collaborations is warranted and required.