

Academic Career in Pilsen – at UWB, scientists will find the gateway to the Region

The project Mobilities 3.0 is not the only one that allows foreign scientists to arrive in Pilsen; also a new project supported by the Pilsen Region makes this possible. Scientists from outside our University will thus be able to help develop not only the University, but also our Region.

The University of West Bohemia is not the only entity in the Region that ensures internationalization. The Pilsen Region Authority is also aware of this need and therefore, in 2019, supported the project Academic Career in Pilsen, which connects the University of West Bohemia and the Faculty of Medicine of Charles University in Pilsen. Thanks to this project, both schools could invite and welcome foreign experts, whose missions would not be accomplished at the University only. On the contrary, the University is supposed to be a gateway to the Pilsen Region for professionals with foreign experience. Through experience from working with international teams, the experts can also contribute to the development of other educational and research organizations in the Region and can choose our Region for a long-term residence – in line with the so-called Regional Innovation Strategy RIS3.

Academic Career in Pilsen is taking place for the first time this year. It differs from the Mobilities 3.0 project (see pages 4 and 5) by only supporting arrivals of foreign experts in Pilsen – not outgoing travels. The Pilsen Region provided 2 million CZK for this project. “As a result, we have supported the arrival of six foreign experts for a stay of about three months, and more than twenty short-term stays of academics and researchers at various career levels. Experts head for conferences, symposia, workshops, lectures and seminars at UWB”, explains Markéta Ulčová of the UWB Project Centre, and adds that, thanks to the support of short-term stays, the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Health Care Studies and the Ladislav Sutnar Faculty of Design and Art were also more easily able to join the Academic Career in Pilsen project. “We prepare a short article about each expert who visits the University of West Bohemia, where we introduce the project participant and highlight his/her involvement in research or teaching activities,” continues Ms. Ulčová. One of the greatest personalities who, thanks to the

Academic Career in Pilsen project, visited UWB this year is Dr. Ivatury S. Raju from NASA, the National Aviation and Space Authority. He participated in a workshop and the international conference DAS 2019 at the Faculty of Applied Sciences. Both academics and students could thus meet with the NASA's Head of Analytical and Computational Methods Department and the Chief Structure and Materials Technologist, who made a significant contribution to the safe operation of shuttles, the International Space Station and commercial flights into space.

The Academic Career in Pilsen project also supported lecturing activities of experts in the Comparative Legal Studies course of the Faculty of Law, where speakers from Lithuania, Italy and Israel were invited. Professor Sandra Villegas, Head of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, visited the Faculty of Health Care Studies for five days. Thanks to this visit, the Faculty established cooperation with this University and negotiated exchanges of academics and students. In addition, this renowned scientist lectured on research into Alzheimer's disease.

The links between the University and the private sector within the Academic Career in Pilsen project can be illustrated by the example of the Chemical Engineering Doctor Fatemeh Gholami from Iran. At her workplace at the Institute of New Technologies – Research Centre (NTC), she is engaged in the development of a prototype of a hydrogen fuel cell bundle with a polymer membrane.

Academic Career in Pilsen will continue in 2020. In August 2019, a selection procedure was held in which a committee of representatives of the University and the Region determined the order of candidates according to the scores obtained. The aim of the project is, again, to increase the number of academics and researchers with foreign experience in educational and research organizations of the Region. “From now on, longer stays will be preferred. We are very interested in foreign experts and, in close cooperation with the Pilsen Region, we can offer them a place where they may wish to work for a long term and help develop not only the University but also the whole Region”, concludes Ms. Ulčová. ●

International Staff Week has twice opened the University of West Bohemia to the world



Strengthening partnerships that already exist and establishing new ones are two of the main goals of the event organized by the International Office of UWB.

In May 2019, representatives of nine countries and thirteen universities met at the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen. Why? They were attracted by the second year of the International StaffWeek event organized by the International Office of UWB. The main goal of International StaffWeek is to spread the reputation of the University of West Bohemia beyond the borders of the country. Fifteen participants of this year's event, including traditional partners of the University of West Bohemia, such as the Finnish HAMK, the Hungarian Corvinus University of Budapest and the French Université de Limoges, had a rich programme that included not only a tour of the campus and expert workshops on frequently discussed topics, such as the impact of incoming students and credit mobilities, but also a visit to the brewery and a tour of the centre of Pilsen.

This time, in addition to colleagues from international offices, employees of university libraries also received invitations to Pilsen; they had a partially separate professional programme that was tailor-made by the team of the University Library of the University of West Bohemia.

Establishing new partnerships is just as important as consolidating existing partnerships, and this is what the second International StaffWeek has done. For example, the Faculty of Applied Sciences has opened up new opportunities for partnerships and study visits at institutions such as the Spanish Universidad Loyola Andalucia and the Belgian Haute Ecole Louvain en Hainaut in Mons. Representatives of other Faculties used the event to establish cooperation in other projects: for example, the Faculty of Economics has partnered with Corvinus University in Budapest in the Visegrad Funds project. International StaffWeek, supported by the project ESF (CZ.02.2.69/0.0/0 .0/16_015/0002287), will be held in 2020 too. ●