



PÉCSI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM  
UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS

# WIV Pécs

2023/1

## INTERNATIONAL

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#studyinPécsHungary



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# THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS IN EUROPE'S ELITE

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**The University of Pécs has been ranked 325th on the list of the best higher education institutions in Europe by Quacquarelli Symonds.**  
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This time, the experts ranked nearly 700 universities from 42 countries across Europe based on 12 criteria from five groups of experts. Among other things, they compared institutions on indicators such as the research ecosystem, career prospects after university and sustainability.

The University of Pécs clearly achieved the best result in the international students' indicator, ranking 100th as the first university in Hungary in the prestigious field. In this respect, the University of Pécs was the second best among Hungarian institutions. This good performance is certainly also due to the fact that the university has attracted students from more than 130 countries. The University of Pécs also achieved an outstanding ranking in terms of the faculty-student ratio, coming 152nd in this indicator.

# Dear Reader,



the modern higher education of Pécs celebrates its centenary. Exactly one hundred years ago, the higher education institution of Bratislava fled to Budapest, and then found its final home in Pécs. This, however, was a process with many difficulties and hard work. Without bishop Gyula Zichy, mayor Andor Nendtvich, minister Kunó Klebelsberg, prime

minister Dr. István Bethlen, the professors and researchers who moved to our city, the *Elisabeth University of Pécs* would certainly not have been able to start operating. In addition to them, many other people also nurtured the revival of the Pécs university tradition. The programs that culminate in our Ceremonial Senate Meeting on 14 October are also intended to restore the light of their faded memories.

The main task of a higher education institution is to train the next generation of intellectuals. This was no different in 1923, than it is today. I am very proud of our students who achieve outstanding results, but also of those who are trying to follow the 'royal path' and not slip in their studies simply do their work with a good diploma after graduation. The support of talented students has always been of paramount importance for me and for the

University of Pécs as well. I would only mention one example of this: to make our students' lives easier in the current economic situation, and in cooperation with the UQA, we are introducing a supplementary doctoral student scholarship, which is designed to prevent our doctoral students from leaving the altar of science for financial reasons.

Today, our university hosts several national laboratories, which promote the integration of basic research results into practice and innovation. We strive to build more intensive relationships with our corporate and service industry partners, thus pursuing our third mission. Our university promotes sports activities and participation in cultural life more extensively. We have also achieved excellent results in developing environmental awareness. So, we have some good performances, but we need to improve in many aspects. After Disraeli: *A University should be a place of light, liberty and learning.* If light does not dazzle, liberty is not lassitude, learning and teaching are everyone's main goals, which we achieve in unity, our future is secured! I would add that the university is a place of scientific research, therefore it is a university and not a college!

Adversities of our environment have not spared us in recent years either. However, as Louis Pasteur said: *Fortune favours the prepared mind.* The University of Pécs, which has already proven itself in the storms of a hundred years, is a good partner for preparation.

I wish everyone a lot of strength and good health to achieve our shared goals!

Dr. Attila Miseta  
Rector





# 2023/24

On the occasion of the Day of Hungarian Higher Education rector Dr. Attila Miseta opened the academic year 2023/24 on the 1 of September in the Dr. Halasy-Nagy József Hall on the Centenary Academic Year Opening Ceremony. Balázs Hankó, minister of state for innovation and higher education, Dr. József Bódis, president of the Universitas Quinqueecclesiensis Foundation, and Attila Péterffy, mayor of the city of Pécs, were also present at the event.

*The day is marked by two anniversaries: 656 for the medieval age and 100 for the modern age. Both numbers are quite high, spanning the lives of many generations of people. These facts certainly indicate that the*

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**University of Pécs is  
a long-established  
university, the first in  
Hungary and one of the  
firsts in Europe**

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*and it is a renewed university as well that has been continuously developing for 100 years, and has survived the vicissitudes of fate – said rector Dr. Attila Miseta.*





# UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS: A GREEN LEADER

*We take sustainability  
seriously!*

## In the world's top 21

In 2022, the institution took part in the *UI GreenMetric World University Rankings* international program for the seventh time, and among the world's *greenest universities*, it finished in an impressive 21st place with the participation of 1050 universities. It proved to be the best among the 11 Hungarian universities listed in the ranking, thus earning the title of the greenest domestic university worldwide in 2022 for the third time.

## Alliance

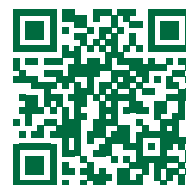
At the initiative of University of Pécs, the Hungarian Universities Sustainability Platform was established in Pécs last year through a framework agreement between 14 Hungarian universities. The alliance aims to share best practices, organize regular joint actions, and cooperate more closely in order to achieve sustainability goals.

## Science in practice

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory operates under the leadership of the University of Pécs. Its goal is to shape Pécs and the region into a hydrogen-based ecosystem. The first steps will be taken in the field of public transport in Pécs, and trainings will also be launched on the possibilities of using hydrogen.

## Events

European Mobility Week, Sustainability Week, and many other programs, both visible and less visible, but all smart, are organized by UP Green University. The citizens of our university have access to several selective waste collection options that are not yet widespread in Hungary, such as the collection of aluminum cans and used cooking oil to protect our waterways. The latter is now easily accessible for residents of the dormitories. In March, they also held a so-called Gicci Ricci Eco Fashion Show. All of the creative clothes presented were the result of the students' independent work, and were made in the spirit of reuse.



QR: [zoldegyetem.pte.hu/en](https://zoldegyetem.pte.hu/en)



# UP INTERNATIONALIZATION AWARD

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The University of Pécs has achieved significant success regarding internationalization in recent years. The first recipient of the newly established UP Internationalization Award was Dr. Akbarali Thobhani, Executive Director of the Office of International Studies at the Metropolitan State University of Denver, a key partner of UP, in recognition of his enthusiastic work of more than a decade. At the award ceremony held in September, Dr. Attila Miseta, rector and Dr. István Tarrósy, head of the UP International Centre congratulated the awardee.  
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Over the past 10 years, the number of international students studying at the University of Pécs has multiplied: currently nearly 5,400 students from more than 130 countries study at a wide variety of programmes at our university. International partners and the continuously developing bilateral relations have also contributed to this success, which played a major role in the establishment of the UP Internationalization Award. Awarded annually by the rector of the university, it honours people, who, through their work, have contributed significantly to the international visibility and wide network of international relations of the University of Pécs.

*We would like to further strengthen our strategic bilateral partnership with MSU Denver University. One of the most prominent figures in this endeavour*

*for years has been Dr. Akbarali Thobhani – explained Dr. István Tarrósy, international director of UP at the award ceremony.*

*Dr. Thobhani has done so much for developing the cooperation between MSU Denver and UP, that we would like to reward his efforts and enduring enthusiasm in the field of internationalization with an award that we newly founded.*

*We plan to present the award annually to persons who, through their outstanding activities, greatly contribute to the development of UP's internationalization efforts – highlighted rector Attila Miseta at the ceremony, then warmly congratulated to Dr. Akbarali Thobhani, the first recipient of the UP Internationalization Award. This year, the award was the unique work of Zsuzsanna Endes (student of the UP Faculty of Arts, her teacher: Dr. Zsuzsa Tóth).*

The Director of the International Centre of the University of Pécs, Dr. István Tarrósy also congratulated Dr. Thobhani: *On the one hand, the award has a serious weight, both literally and figuratively, it weighs more than 5 kg, which symbolizes that Dr. Akbarali Thobhani is a heavy-weight player. On the other hand, it depicts a pronounced dynamism that characterizes both the awardee and his work in the field of internationalization.*

**After the award ceremony, we asked Dr. Akbarali Thobhani to share his thoughts.**

**How long does this partnership go back?**

About twelve years, we started at about 2010. That is when Pécs was



the European Cultural Capital and the first students came here to look at the architecture and renovations that were going on at that time. Since then, every year, this partnership has been building. I am very grateful for the university for this recognition and look forward to continue to build our collaboration.

**What do you think are the benefits of this cooperation?**

It brings us closer together, connects our academic faculty with the faculty over here, they collaborate in research, our students benefit from faculty of Pécs, who come to teach at our university and overall, it enriches the academic experiences of both universities and students.

**What do you think could be the next steps in this collaboration?**

This delegation consists of new department heads and deans, in areas of health sciences and social work. We are hoping that collaboration will build up in these areas.

**Do you also teach at the MSU Denver?**

I no longer teach. I am a full-time administrator. But when I was a teaching faculty member, my area of expertise was African Studies. I used to teach a lot about African history, African politics, and I did my research on a topic related to Africa.

**Then you also have a connection with Dr. István Tarrósy in this aspect?**

We did not collaborate at that time, but since we have come to

know each other, I try to attend the biannual African Studies Conference, that he organizes and try to do a presentation at that conference. We were here in April to participate in this conference, and our university co-sponsors the conference.

**How long have you been the head of the International Studies Office at MSU Denver?**

16 years now. The best part I think is to create opportunities for our students and faculty to engage in international experiences. And we do this through developing study abroad courses, as well create opportunities for faculty mobility.

**Is there much interest on the Denver side for Hungary?**

Since this partnership, the interest has increased, yes. We recently won a Fulbright grant for next year, which we are very excited about bringing a group of faculty, students and teachers for a one-month experience in Hungary.

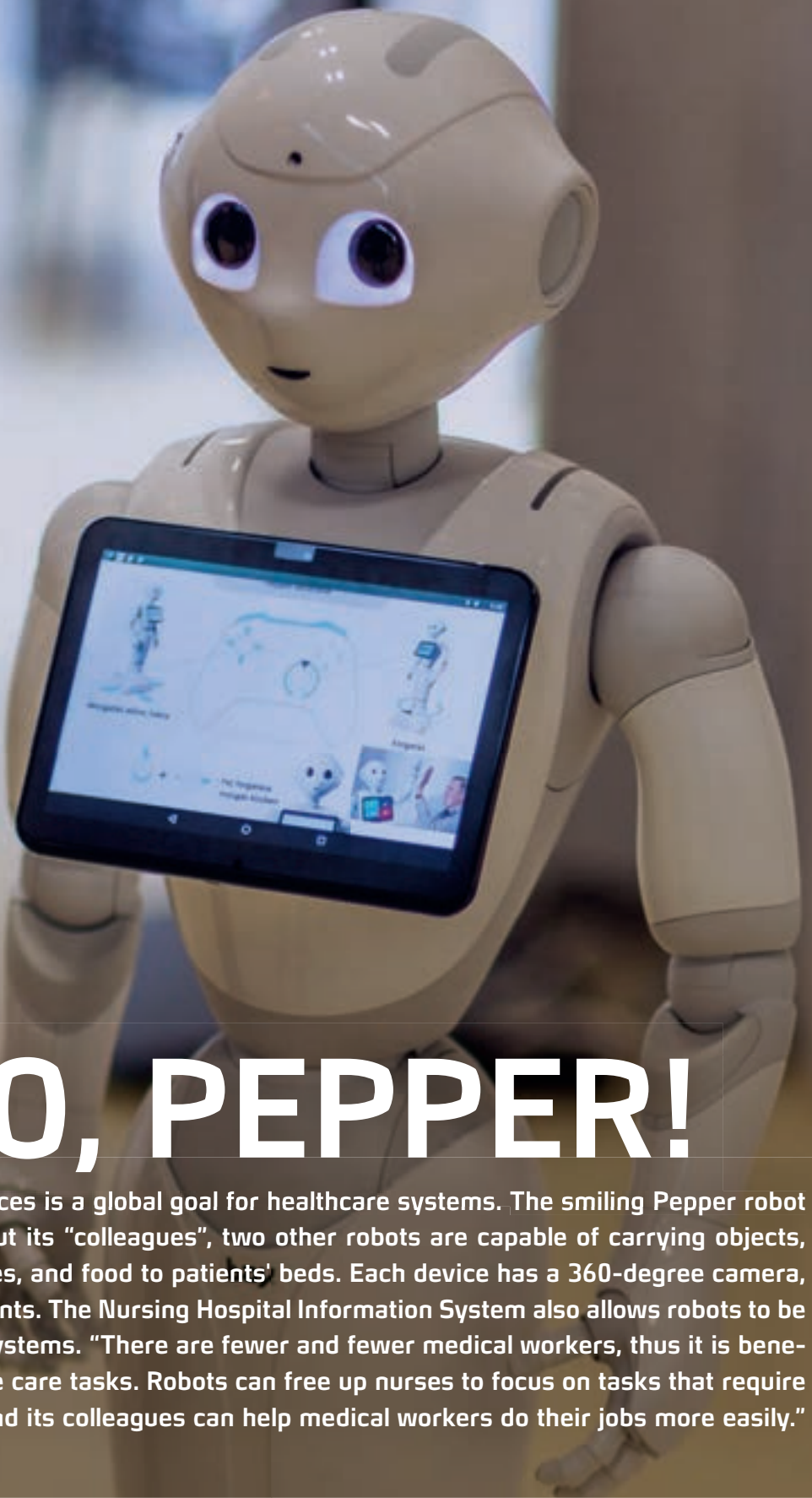
**Do you have a message for our students and faculty?**

My message would be, since I am such a supporter of international collaboration, for the students: Don't limit yourself to only your domestic areas of interest, look beyond the borders and engage with colleagues, with other students, other faculty beyond the borders. It is a wonderful experience not only in terms of what you learn about other cultures, but also in terms of what you learn about yourself. It is a very personally enriching experience.



**Akbarali [Ali] Thobhani, Ph.D., Executive Director**

Dr. Akbarali Thobhani is the Executive Director of the Office of International Studies. Dr. Thobhani has served on the faculty of MSU Denver for more than thirty years and has developed and taught numerous courses on Africa, the Middle East and Islam. He is the author of numerous articles and three books – Islam's Quiet Revolutionary: The Story of Aga Khan IV; Mansa Musa: The Golden King of Ancient Mali; and Western Sahara Since 1975: Social, Political, and Economic Transformation Under Moroccan Administration. He is a recipient of six Fulbright grants to conduct curriculum enrichment seminars for teachers and faculty in Egypt, Kenya and Ghana. Dr. Thobhani is a recipient of numerous awards including the Golden Key Excellence in Teaching Award, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Award, and the United Nations Peace Medal.



# HELLO, PEPPER!

Using smart and robotic devices is a global goal for healthcare systems. The smiling Pepper robot is good at communication, but its “colleagues”, two other robots are capable of carrying objects, medication, diagnostic devices, and food to patients' beds. Each device has a 360-degree camera, and all can interact with patients. The Nursing Hospital Information System also allows robots to be integrated into hospital subsystems. “There are fewer and fewer medical workers, thus it is beneficial to use robots for routine care tasks. Robots can free up nurses to focus on tasks that require human interaction. Pepper and its colleagues can help medical workers do their jobs more easily.” said Dr. István Wittmann.



# EDUC CONTINUES ITS WORK **AT** **FULL THROTTLE**

Éva Harka 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

In January this year, members of the EDUC Alliance had met in person at the Jaume I University in Spain, and this time the work continued in a hybrid format at the University of Pécs in March.

*EDUC is a great success for us, said Dr. Attila Misa-ta, Rector of the University of Pécs, in his welcome speech on behalf of the host institution. Dr. Florian Schweigert, Vice President for International Affairs of the University of Potsdam, which coordinates the EDUC Alliance, also welcomed the participants. The last time we met here in person was before the coronavirus outbreak, said Florian Schweigert, adding, Since then, we have added two new members to our alliance, and new tasks and more challenging areas have opened up for us. He recalled an incident at the University of Potsdam, where a colleague was working on an EDUC-related project without instructions from the management. I do not think we have lost control; on the contrary, I think it is a good sign: we have reached a moment where EDUC is moving for-*

*ward on its own, going beyond the local level of each university, highlighted Florian Schweigert.*

The two days were about talking through the experiences of the different functions, sharing good practices, and discussing how they can be assisted by the organization. Members were also working on how to meet the IT challenges they face in the work of the alliance.

There were two kick-off workshops of tasks led by the University of Pécs, as well. One was about the establishment of a Knowledge Investment Fund, for which the members in the coming months will first explore funding opportunities and then develop a fundraising strategy. The other one was to help the take-off of EDUC communication and community building. EDUC continues its work at full throttle.



# HOW DO 8 UNIVERSITIES ACCOMPLISH 27 TASKS?

The University of Pécs has come up with a new way of working in the framework of EDUC: it is working on 27 tasks in the framework of management innovation to advance the internationalization of higher education in Europe. The first event in this spirit was held in 8 June in the Senate Hall of the University.

Éva Harka  Szabolcs Csontos

University alliances have been created in order to renew and make European higher education more competitive. EDUC is one of them, and the University of Pécs has been part of the internationalization consortium from the very beginning. The topic has been divided into 27 tasks, which the 8 partners will tackle together, but each partner will work on the issues in different ways. Some allies of UP are working with the same team of a few people, while others – like UP – have asked experts to ensure that the solutions are as up-to-date and succinct as possible.

The working groups focus on the 27 tasks separately, but the innovation in Pécs is that every 3-4 months, all those working on the EDUC tasks meet and listen to each other about where each task stands. This both allows the participants to see the whole picture and gives them a chance to collaborate and inspire each other with innovative ideas, recognising the common intersection of separate topics.

## See the bigger picture

*It is a methodological innovation, with regular meetings. Our aim is to learn more about the project as a whole and to work together in synergy. Today's is the first pilot event, said Dr. István Tarrósy, Head of the UP International Centre. The participants represented almost all units of the University of Pécs – perhaps even the Senate does not cover the institution in such detail. The picture slowly emerged for the participants in each working group: while one of them is concerned with promoting the research career, another is trying to describe the common values of the members of the association. EDUC is a huge project, and indeed a project that shapes European higher education as a whole, so it is important to work on all aspects of internationalisation. By the end of the project, EDUC will be a university association operating smoothly and on the basis of shared values, within an optimal legal framework, providing joint degrees and micro-certifi-*



cations to its students, which are in demand on the labour market, promoting their research careers, creating new opportunities for its PhD students, teachers and staff, communicating effectively and creating the administrative, legal and IT conditions for all this to go beyond national boundaries.

Another innovation among the tasks is a proposal from the UP, which plans for the more distant future of the project: they are working on creating the financial basis for cooperation independently of EU and other funding sources. *For many, the idea seemed a bit daunting at first, but let us give it a try, as the aim is to make the EDUC alliance sustainable for several decades*, said Dr. István Tarrósy. Under the aegis of another task, they are working on

a system of internationally feasible R&D&I activities interlinked with economic actors.

### Inspiring coffee breaks

Intersections among the different tasks emerged, which the experts were able to discuss informally. Moreover, common problems emerged: the need to create a legal, economic and administrative framework, alongside/between widely differing national regulations, that creates a common basis accepted by all partners in the changing world of higher education in Europe. The range of participants in the alliance is also diverse: for example, among the partners there are mega-

puses in the capital, institutions in smaller and larger rural towns, and a university which consists of campuses in several small towns. Meanwhile, national regulations are also changing – in Hungary, for example, the concept of *academic achievement* in higher education will be redefined in the near future. After the big picture, there were already points of contact along which those working in isolation could engage in fruitful discussions.

● University of South-Eastern (Norway)

● University of Potsdam (Germany)

● Masaryk University (Czech R.)

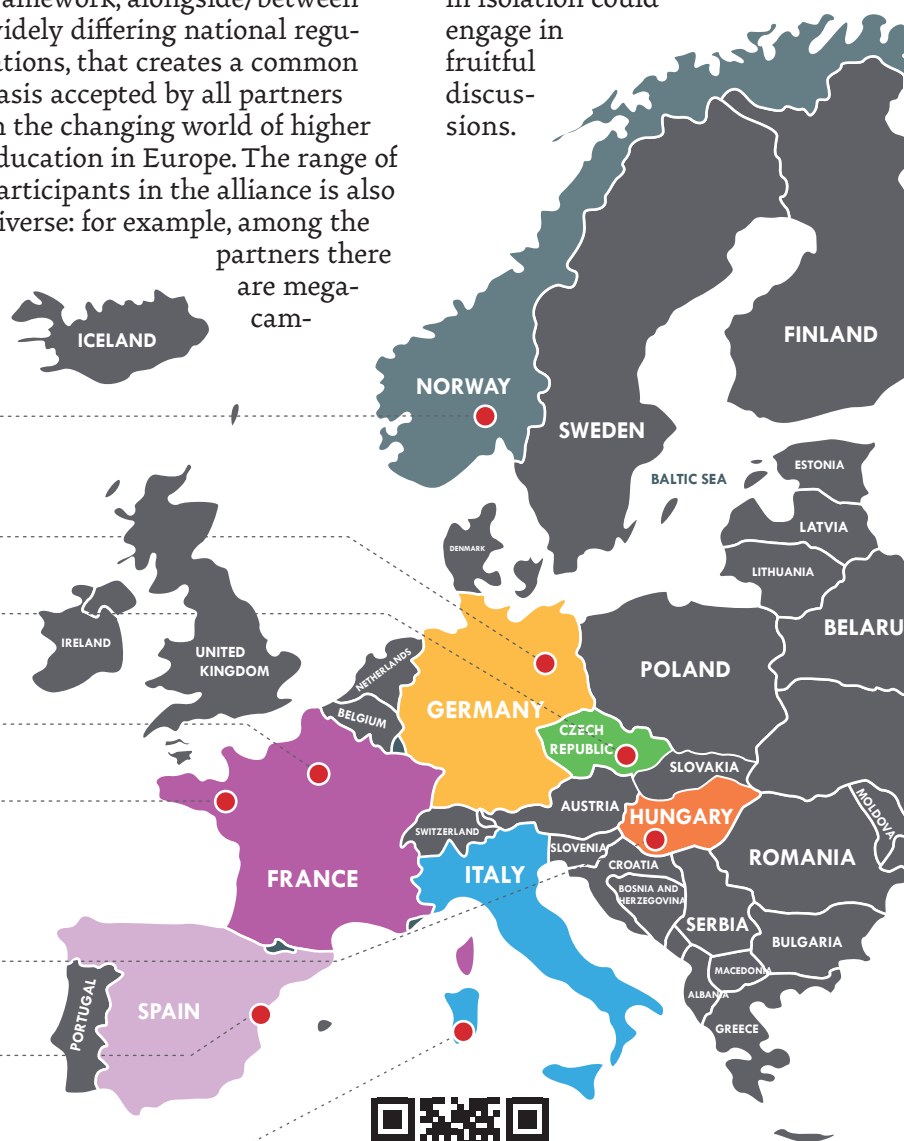
● University Paris Nanterre (France)

● University of Rennes (France)

● University of Pécs (Hungary)

● University Jaume I (Spain)

● University of Cagliari (Italy)



Members of the EDUC Alliance. Illustration: UnivPécs

Videos and podcast: [www.youtube.com/@educuniversity9394](https://www.youtube.com/@educuniversity9394)

# DETERMINATION AND PASSION IN BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING



## INTERVIEW WITH HONORIS CAUSA **PROF. DR. METIN AKAY**

The University of Pécs conferred the degree of honorary doctor upon the internationally renowned professor of biomedical engineering at the University of Houston, Dr. Metin Akay. His inauguration took place at the Ceremonial Senate Meeting in 9 March at the Dr. Halasy-Nagy Lecture Hall. The prominent professor has been actively working in close cooperation with the University of Pécs since 2017. Through his numerous professional achievements in the field of biomedical engineering as well as his important contributions in the establishment of the biomedical engineering master programme and the 3D Printing and Visualization Centre at the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology and the Medical School of the University he has greatly benefited the University of Pécs as well as Hungarian science.

Mariann Tóth  Szabolcs Csontos

**Could you please tell us more about your connection to the University of Pécs?**

We met dean Dr. Miklós Nyitrai and Dr. Luca Tóth and Dr. Péter Maróti in Spain, I was one of the co-organizers of the event. After some initial interactions, we soon started talking about collaboration. They invited me to the campus in 2017 and I was really impressed by the reputation of the university, its history and a very deep, rich culture in Hungary,

especially in Pécs, which has been the heart of Europe for many centuries. We could see the potential.

**What was your motivation to get into the field of biomedical engineering?**

I graduated from one of the most prestigious undergraduate universities in Turkey, Boğaziçi University, which is the first American university built in 1863 and operated by the Americans. Biomedical engineering, healthcare engineer-

ing, to me are extremely important, because whatever you do,

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**even the small things could have an impact on the well-being of human beings globally**

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so it translates and scales to the large population of the world. The reward that you will get at the end is immense.

### **What do you think the future of medicine is like?**

I think the future is today. Many things that we dreamed of three decades ago, are reality right now, like having neural prostheses with neural feedback, so that the patient can feel the heat and pressure, because these can be carried to the brain. We have been collaborating with Japanese colleagues, Prof. Jun Ota, and we have developed the imaging implants that can go to the brain, the size is 300-600  $\mu\text{m}$ , so we can record hundreds and thousands of neurons at the same time. This is going to revolutionize the field of addiction and pain research. I believe that the major challenges for us in the future are chronic disease, substance abuse, mental disease, and infectious diseases, which will continue to affect us.

## **The future is the data science, and digital health will revolutionize the healthcare systems, healthcare delivery, medical practice, and education**

There are challenges, for example data privacy and cybersecurity and the most important: these

technologies should be accessible by everyone. Equity of these is very important. We have to address the unmet needs of health disparity especially.

However, these innovations are not yet integrated into our curriculums. Engineering, medicine and biology should be integrated so that we can create better, intelligent drugs, better healthcare and also take care of the patients at remote locations.

We send astronauts, space explorers on missions, but microgravity and health are big problems, and even from distance is it possible to have a highly intelligent medical advisor based on AI with them in the aircraft,

to bring people's attention to that it is not only medicine, not only engineering, but also science. We need to integrate that too.

### **What do you think would be the next step for the University of Pécs on this road?**

We should start today with building the institute of healthcare innovations. That is very important. It should consist of faculty of engineering, basic science, social science and also business, as well as medicine. The focus should be on innovations, which have immediate influence on the healthcare, clinical practice. Economics is very important as well,



or better diagnostic tools, portable scans that they can take with them in space and also very important on the Earth when they come back. That is a fascinating world for young people. I wanted

because research should always have return on investment delivered back to the university.

I would strongly encourage you to have an institute for space medicine. I had the great pleas-

ure of sitting next to Dr. Ádám Schlégl at the dinner, who has been selected as one of the four candidates for orbit. The impact of his presence and his influence on the next generation of leaders will be fantastic. Also, the data collected by an astronaut can be analysed by a data scientist. We can develop the technologies that they can take with them to the orbit. All those are highly exciting to me. I think it is going to be challenging, and this challenge will also bring an impact on society.

We also need to pay attention to climate change. It is getting worse everywhere. But it is also affecting how we deliver the healthcare. We need to develop

better strategies, better technologies to build resilient systems, because climate change will bring infectious diseases.

### **Do you have a message to our students?**

I think you need to think about the future. And the future is today. You have to work on the challenging problems, because challenge is increasing the creativity. You should not consider a career, or just a job to continue your lives. But you need to see how you can impact other people's lives. The impact comes from the human resources. And what you have determination and passion for.

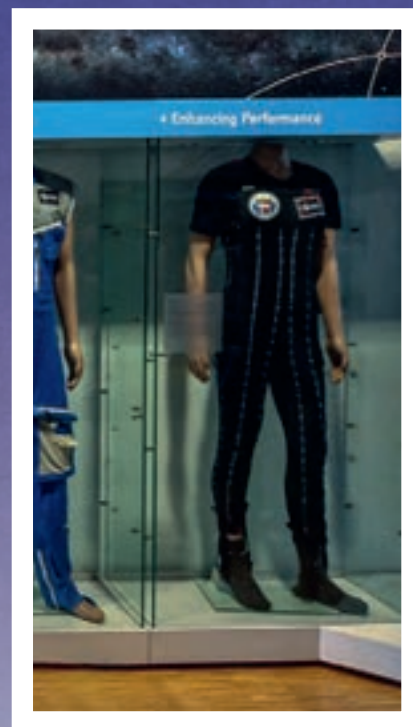
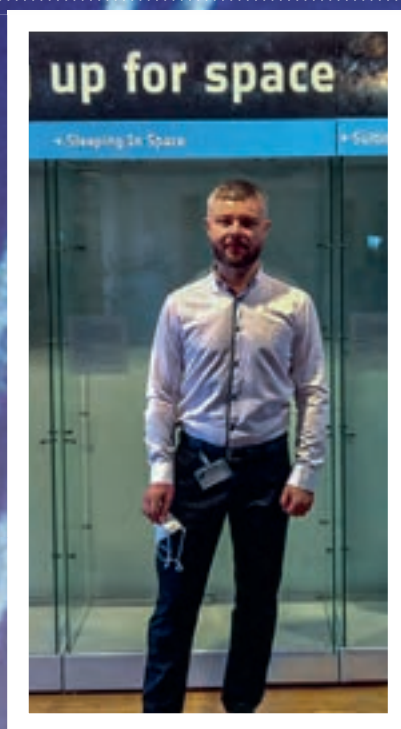
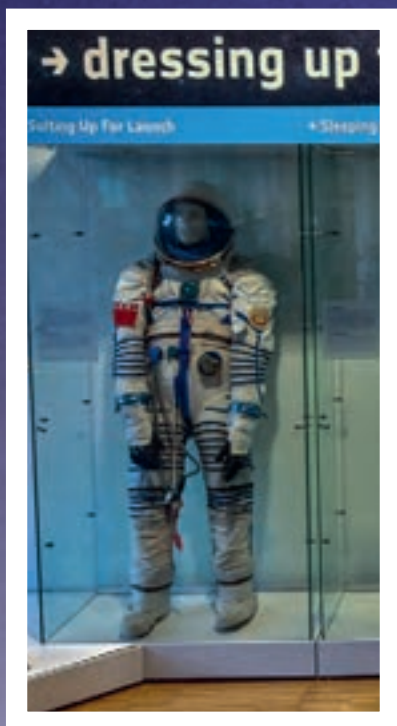
**Prof. Metin Akay** (University of Houston) has played a key role in promoting biomedical education in the world by writing and editing several books, prestigious journals, and giving more than hundred keynote, plenary and invited talks at international conferences, symposiums and workshops regarding emerging technologies in biomedical engineering. His Neural Engineering and Informatics Lab is interested in developing an intelligent wearable system for monitoring motor functions in Post-Stroke Hemiplegic Patients and detecting coronary artery disease. In addition, his lab is currently investigating the effect of nicotine on the dynamics of ventral tegmental area (VTA) dopamine neural networks as well as the detection of coronary occlusions.





# ORTHOPAEDIC SPECIALIST OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS AMONG THE FINAL FOUR CANDIDATES TO SPACE!

Dr. Ádám Schlégl, orthopaedic specialist at the University of Pécs Clinical Centre, is also among the four Hungarian astronaut candidates, according to the press conference of the Hungarian Astronaut Program (Hunor), which was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.



The UP teaching assistant managed to get into the final team out of the more than 240 applicants who applied to the Hunor program. The four selected candidates take part in training programs, after which the most perfect candidate can start the task.

*Going into space might be the biggest adventure, the most special experience a human can have. Almost all children have a point in their lives when they are very interested in space. Many end up losing this interest, but that was not the case for me, I am still a*

*space fan. Moreover, the experiments to be conducted and their scientific potential and the wish for adventure are all motivation for me" – said Ádám Schlégl.*

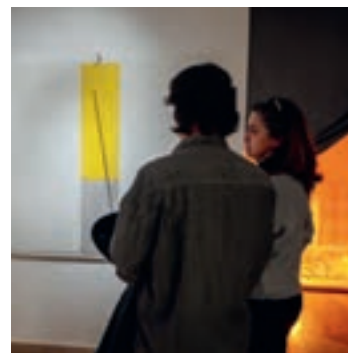
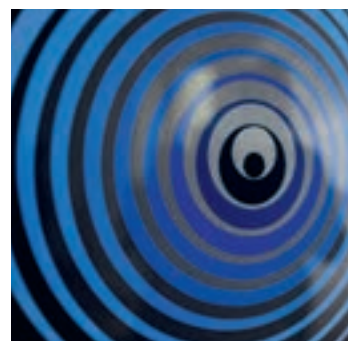
# OP ART

An interactive, exciting, and inspiring exhibition opened at the Janus Pannonius Museum in the spring of 2023, featuring the work of architecture students from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology of the University of Pécs and the Department of Architecture of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design.

The exhibition was designed to raise awareness of op art and Victor Vasarely's work among young people.

The architectural material of the Op Art Academy was presented: a walk-through installation (the Light Trap) experimenting with the spatial effects of light, a spatial sculpture based on Vasarely motifs, designs for the Vasarely Museum's planned visitor center, models, video materials, and panels presenting the tradition of the idea of the *Colorful City* greeted visitors. The guest of honor at the opening of the exhibition was Ugo Vasarely, the great-grandson of Victor Vasarely, the eldest son of Pierre Vasarely, the honorary doctor of the University of Pécs.

● spirit of the times ●





# LEARNING HUNGARIAN IS VALUABLE

I asked Dr. Katalin Pelcz, head of the Hungarian program at the UPMS International Studies Centre, who has decades of experience in this field, about the possibilities of learning Hungarian as a foreign language. She is the co-author of the MagyarOK textbook series, which is used in UP courses and in many countries of the world to teach Hungarian as a foreign language. The Hungarian Language and Culture Summer University, which has been held successfully for 24 years, attracts visitors from all over the world to get acquainted with this unique language and culture.





## Why is it worth learning Hungarian well?

Today, technology provides numerous possibilities to solve questions of everyday life easily. However, there are many positive benefits of learning Hungarian well. Students who are open to this world are simply more motivated. We Hungarians appreciate it when a foreigner learns Hungarian. After all, whoever puts that energy into it can use a very high percentage of it, according to our experience. Their relationship with Hungarians and the world of work will be completely different, and even in their CV there will be an element that makes them different from the rest: interesting.

In today's age, it is worth learning a language only if you would like to reach not only the survival level, but the level of independent language user. That is why we offer courses at ISC for over six semesters. At B1 level, the world opens, and language learners can manage in any situation on their own, without a language teacher. Therefore, just like the credo of the MagyarOK textbook family, we want to educate students who become independent language users. It is a great pleasure for us that after the compulsory courses for the Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship, more and more students come to the advanced groups as well. It is positive feedback that this year the advanced courses filled up in an instant.

As a core idea of model-based language learning, we believe that language skills can only be acquired through language use. We also structure language lessons in such a way that they are also a place for language use. Grammar tables will not make useful lan-

## Did the British ambassador learn Hungarian at the University of Pécs?

We have a very old and good relationship with the British Embassy: two ambassadors and two deputy ambassadors have completed their immersion courses with us. Since they use the MagyarOK textbooks in the British Foreign Office Language Institute in London as well, they contacted us, and depending on how much time each diplomat had to learn the language, they studied with us for 1-3 months before being inducted. Iain Lindsay, our former ambassador, recently gave a speech in Hungarian at the Liszt Institute in London.

## If someone wants to learn Hungarian, where should they go?

Everyone is welcome in Pécs, 30 Damjanich str., UPMS ISC. Our philosophy is that anyone who

wants to learn Hungarian can do so here.

## Anyone can enroll for a semester or attend our intensive courses. When registered through Neptun, the training is free

and those who cannot enroll as a university student, they have to pay for the courses. In addition to university students, foreigners living in the area and working in the city also come here to study. We divide students into groups based solely on language proficiency levels. Those who have time in the summer can come and join the Hungarian Language and Culture Summer University.



guage skills. Language learners can learn and interpret those at home and come to class to practice. This is one of the driving forces of the MagyarOK textbook family.

We hope that students will confirm that the language spoken in a particular country can be immensely useful and valuable. Although nowadays it is possible to create a language environment anywhere, it is simply *different* to learn a particular language, in this case Hungarian, in the native environment. In Hungary, the language learners can speak Hungarian to pretty much anyone who they come across. It is also important that while learning the language, they get to know and experience our cultural values, not only the very exciting gastro-culture, but for example, they can go to museums, concerts, or book launches.

### **How difficult is it to learn Hungarian?**

From a language learning point of view, it is just like any other language. In the beginning, you really need to master more rules at a skill level to be able to start talking to someone. As with any language, Hungarian requires learning. It is very important for students to find a way to use the language skills they have acquired.

### **If someone speaks to us in Hungarian, should we answer in Hungarian?**

We Hungarians tend to switch to another language very easily if a foreigner speaks to us in Hungarian, even if we speak that language worse than they speak Hungarian. I would encourage everyone to help them learn Hungarian, answer questions, and talk in Hungarian! Foreigners who

learn Hungarian will simply be more attached to us, and this will be more useful later for establishing contacts between countries, etc. Therefore, I am very glad that it is mandatory for Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship students to study Hungarian, since they are recipients of an excellence scholarship from the Hungarian state, learning Hungarian at a basic level is the least that can be expected. To build real relationships, such as alumni, it would be essential for our students to reach the level of independent language learning.

### **Which is the latest addition of MagyarOK textbooks?**

The MagyarOK textbook series has four volumes: volumes A1+ and A2+ contain everything you need to become an independent language user, but students usually believe this only at the first lessons of B1. After completing vol. B2+, they can safely go to study at a Hungarian university in Hungarian. The textbooks are based on the method of model-based language teaching, which we developed together with Szilvia Szita. To put it simply, every pro-

ductive task in language learning is preceded by a model that can be followed. Another didactic principle of the textbook family is spirality, so we move forward with continuous repetition and variations, in small steps. The progression is strong, and we take the natural language that Hungarians use in everyday life as a basis.

Our latest publication, Systematizing Hungarian Grammar with many examples, is a two-volume publication that approaches grammatical issues from the point of view of language use. It was a big project, summing up seven years of work. I would like to highlight the work of Tamás Görbe, project manager. The book is a joint product of UP, Humboldt University of Berlin and the Institute for Model-Based Language Education, with co-authors Tamás Görbe and Szilvia Szita. The books were published this summer. Perhaps their main value are the tasks that can be turned into communication, based on large language inputs, with which one can practice how the student can solve a certain situation. I recommend it to anyone who likes it!



# DIASPORA: BORDERLESS COMMUNITIES

Mariann Tóth  Szabolcs Csontos



Within the framework of the centenary program series "From the past to the future – The first hundred years of modern higher education in Pécs (1923–2023)", the Institute of English Studies and Hungarian Language and Literature of the UP Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, together with the UP Diaspora Project Network, organized an international conference with the title "Diaspora 2023 – Borderless Communities" in May at the headquarters of the Pécs Regional Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

**T**he scientific symposium explored the diverse cultural heritage of diaspora communities and strengthened community consciousness and bonds. Networking and strengthening intergenerational links were key goals. More than seventy scientific presentations were delivered in attendance and online, in Hungarian and English, presenting the results of eighty-seven researchers in parallel sessions. In his welcome speech, Dr. Tamás Fedeles, Vice-Rector for Education and Chairman of the Centenary Programme Management Committee, emphasized:

**We think in terms of nations, and we have always thought in terms of nations, not borders.**

He added that the UP Diaspora Project Network was established in connection with the university's 650th-anniversary program series, so its roots go back many years.

At the symposium, we heard about the importance of digital value preservation, about diaspora radios available online in several parts of the world (e.g., Calgary, Toronto, Vancouver, Cleveland, New Jersey, Youngstown, Montevideo and Sydney), about the fact that language elements often reflect identity change, and about the fact that the more young people can speak Hungarian with their own age group, the more likely they are to be able to connect with the Hungarian language in a relevant way.

*I have been in contact with the Hungarian diaspora in São Paulo for seven years, of the size of a hundred thousand people, mostly with those who teach or study Hungarian. I have been holding teacher training courses on methodology, organized by the University of São Paulo and then in the past two years by the Hungarian House of São Paulo, with the participation of teachers and colleagues from other Brazilian cities. Further training courses are embraced by the methodology of model-based language teaching:*

*demonstration classes, workshops on specific topics, and discussions on the transmission of Hungarian language and culture. During attendance trainings, I try to participate in the programs of the Hungarian colony, such as the October 23 celebration, dances, or the Hungarian dinner, so I can talk not only with the teachers but also with the students who are of Hungarian descent in the highest percentage – said Dr. Katalin Pelcz, Hungarian program leader of the UPMS International Studies Centre.*



**BASED ON THE IDEAS  
OF TWO UNIVERSITY  
STUDENTS IN PÉCS, THE  
VIROLOGICAL PROTECTION  
OF THE COUNTRY IS  
STRENGTHENED**

RoLink Biotechnology Ltd. and the University of Pécs have established a procedure and a device that can measure the immune response to the coronavirus. The invention not only contributes to the understanding of coronaviruses, but is also a basis for vaccine production and the measurement of immune response. Dr. Zoltán Birkner, head of the National Research, Development and Innovation Office, Dr. Ferenc Jakab, Vice-Rector of the University of Pécs, head of the National Laboratory of Virology, as well as members of the startup that managed the idea, RoLink Biotechnology Ltd., Dr. Roland Hetényi and Dr. Dániel Hanna, held a press conference on the exceptional inventions in early 2023 at the Szentágothai Research Center of the University of Pécs.

### From contribution to startup

Two sixth-year medical students – Dr. Roland Hetényi and Dr. Dániel Hanna – were thinking about how they could contribute to the fight against the coronavirus epidemic in 2020. They had an idea that aimed the measuring the virus and the immune response to it. With this, they met Dr. Ferenc Jakab, who has since become the head of the National Laboratory of Virology (VNL). The specialist saw the potential

in the idea and involved the Ministry of Innovation and Technology into the process. The young people launched a startup built on their idea.

They worked on the project for two years, which required not only financial support, but also a network of contacts, access to data and devices. The result is a series of discoveries that can be classified as basic research, which are only millimeters away from social utilization.

### Forward-looking inventions

*Over the two years, we conducted 150 experiments, used 125 blood samples, 25 scientists contributed to our project. Our goal was to build on the virus, but in a way that does not infect – there are few places where you can work with an active coronavirus. In February 2021, we were able to prove, together with VNL, proven through five types of procedures, that the coronavirus can be inactivated in just 30 seconds. This alone has numerous options for application.*

*We created a UVC chamber and a device that we named 'Picur', for which we also filed a patent – we hope it will be a success story, – said Dr. Roland Hetényi. During the project, the researchers managed to inactivate the genetic material of the coronavirus with the help of UVC light without damaging the virus in its structure, so it was possible to study the processes triggered by the coronavirus in the human body. Specialists from the UP National Laboratory of Virology have proven the inactivation effect for both the Wuhan and delta variants. Dr. Roland Hetényi added: *In order to accurately measure the immune**

*response induced by COVID-19, the coronavirus had to be produced as pure as possible. This is not easy even for large vaccine manufacturers. It took nearly half a year of hard work, but we have managed to produce it with 96% purity in 30 minutes. The inactivated, purified virus could be a globally relevant product – underlined Dr. Roland Hetényi, who also talked about the fact that the technology of detecting the immune response to the virus has also been improved and innovated – this branch of the project is also being further developed with VNL. Their goal is no less, than to further develop the virological defense capabilities of Hungary.*

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**“This is a major step forward in covid research today, but it can be applied to more pathogens in the future, so we can more easily prepare for any new infectious disease that are unfortunately likely to affect the population” – emphasized Ferenc Jakab.**

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## Research for the benefit of society

*The government revisited the field of R&D in 2018 and realised that there were no significant collaborations between the mid-performing academic and industrial sectors. We have defined responsibilities and needs, we have redefined institutions, we have doubled the resources for innovation. That is when covid came, – said Dr. Zoltán Birkner, head of the National Research, Development and Innovation Office, and then stated: What we had to initiate from above in Hungary started on its own as a result of the epidemic. In one month, 100*

*applications were received to offer a solution for different problem areas of covid. Between March 2020 and February 2021, we spent 20 billion HUF on the cooperation of companies with the academic field. Covid has brought with it what we wanted to achieve: the cooperation of the two sectors. The joint work of UP and RoLink Biotechnology Ltd. is proof of the effective cooperation between the university ecosystem and the biotechnology industry, which can be considered a successful model of domestic research and innovation – this is why the head of the National Research, Development and Innovation Office visited the project closing event.*

*Covid has caused a lot of trouble and suffering, but just as much good has happened because of it – the scientific world has been invigorated in this field, researchers have come together and the opportunity has opened up for corporate collaborations in the name of economic/social utilization, serving the common good. Working with RoLink Biotechnology Ltd. is like that. The continuous strengthening of company cooperations will be important in the future as well. The goal should be to take the knowledge outside the laboratory and make practical use of it –said Dr. Ferenc Jakab.*

# THE YOUTH ENERGY

**Dr. Zsófia Biró** (Department of Technology Law and Energy Law at the Faculty of Law) has been awarded the title of Young Energy Ambassador of the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency. As a Young Energy Ambassador, she participated in the European Sustainable Energy Week 2023 conference in Brussels, subtitled "Summing up the transformation of clean energy – towards lower bills and greater competence".

And how can young people shape the future of the EU energy sector? Scan the QR code and visit [international.pte.hu/news/zsofiabiro\\_energy](https://international.pte.hu/news/zsofiabiro_energy)







# AI or not AI?

## That is the question!

Éva Harka  Szabolcs Csontos

Legislators are usually just chasing technical solutions. This is no different for artificial intelligence, yet the world does not stand still. How to use AI ethically? We asked Dr. Balázs Hohmann, Assistant Professor at the Department of Technology Law and Energy Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Pécs.

## **Artificial intelligence has already developed exponentially – what is it about Chat GPT and systems like it that have made people lose their minds?**

I think it has caught the attention of society because it has brought the application much closer to us and the results that AI generates are more tangible and concrete than before. It displays perhaps one of the most important skills of humanity, linguistic fluency, and ordinary people can use it to produce useful results for themselves. Another breakthrough is the adequate use of languages other than English.

### **On what grounds are the texts used?**

This is the biggest concern with Chat GPT and similar applications! In general, the source of the data obtained is uncertain and even presumably illegitimate. It is not talked about much by the developers, but it seems that in order to get to this level, live communications – chat messages, voice calls and two-way written communications – had to be processed. Indeed, these platforms provide some opportunity for information to slip out the back door, but let us face it: we have loaded this system with data ourselves. It is no coincidence that the European data protection authorities have jumped on the issue and banned its use in some Member States until they get adequate answers.

### **If I do not like it, and I do not want my stuff to be virtually stolen, intercepted, what can I do other than turn everything off forever?**

This really is not an option. All we can suggest is that it is worth going through your privacy settings in

depth and deciding what you will compromise on and what you will not compromise on. It is not a safeguard against everything, but it will certainly give you an understanding of what you can expect on a given platform, and it may also encourage you to switch platforms.

### **To what extent is the user protected by law?**

Europe and America have stepped up in this field, trying to put some kind of legal net around users to protect them. The European Union is leading the way in this area, trying to create a well-regulated environment to sustain the European economy and prosperity.

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**I am convinced that, at the same time, we need education at a societal level in order to understand why our data is valuable and what problems it causes if it falls into unauthorised hands.**

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### **How can an app like Chat GPT be held accountable if it lies? How can I avoid being tricked?**

It depends on what the service you are using is undertaking, what is in the terms and conditions (laughs). Language models are undertaking to simulate hu-

man communication with great efficiency. In fact, their original purpose is not to assist in the production or transmission of information, but to make people believe that they are communicating with people. Anyone who does not see it that way is, I think, misunderstanding it. When I use it as a source, I must regard the content generated by the language models as of uncertain credibility, because I am aware that the algorithm is working to make me believe what it claims and to maintain communication. This is why most language models are 'hallucinating', i.e. they are simply filling in the missing data with something.

### **How legal is it if I write a thesis using Chat GPT? Some people say that AI is the end of universities because of this.**

I do not agree. The university is organising knowledge in a credible way, according to defined scientific standards, and will continue to do so. But my own view is that this is an issue that is heating up higher education institutions in Europe and America. There are universities that completely ban the use of these tools. I do not agree with this because this attitude is inappropriate to deal with the situation. I believe – and I am pleased that, based on the experience gained in the subject-specific working groups that have been organised so far, the University of Pécs is also moving in this direction – that we should try to regulate how this technology can be used. I think it is very important to raise awareness of what the ethical way is, and the extent to which we can make these rules understood plays a key role in this.



# RECOMMENDED APPS



## UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY

Centenary walks in Pécs

<https://varosfoglalo.pecs.monguz.hu/>



## DRYVER

collecting data to protect our small watercourses

<https://www.dryver.eu/app>



## MOSQUITOALERT

For mosquito monitoring

[www.szunyogmonitor.hu](http://www.szunyogmonitor.hu)



## LUNGSCREEN

Lung cancer risk assessment

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=hu.markcon.lungtumourfilter>



## GREENAURA

For a greener Pécs

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=hu.itq.GreenAuraApp>



# EMOTIONAL, NOT PHILOSOPHICAL



**To mark the anniversary of the birth of Hungarian higher education, Kossuth Prize winner János Vajda composed *Te deum*, and now a new, centenary piece of music to celebrate the move of the University of Bratislava to Pécs. We spoke to the composer before the performance, immediately after the second rehearsal conducted by Balázs Kocsár.**

**How challenging was the poem *Towards the Absolute* by Sándor Weöres as lyrics?**

I knew the text. I think a lot of poems of Weöres are lending themselves to music easily. However, *Towards the Absolute* does not do that at all. (laughs) I thought it was an impossible task. However, there is a Latin apocryphal poem at the beginning of the work, which can be set to music very well. This got me out of trouble. After this realization I just had to find passages that, apart from being beautiful and wise, could be lived emotionally and not necessarily need to be interpreted on a cognitive level. In addition to the *Apocryphon*, the *Ten Balconies* and the *Song of the Stairs* were the two choral

pieces chosen, including a section about the existence of God.

**Now that I have listened to it, it seems to me to be an optimistic, life-affirming piece. Do I feel it right?**

I hope so. I intended it to be.

**Latin is a standard part of university ceremonies. The atmosphere of this language could be felt in your piece of music, but I did not understand what the lyrics were about.**

I am aware that the lyrics are not understandable. It is difficult to understand a choral work even without an orchestra, because when fifty people sing, they all pronounce the words differently, they all spoil the words differently. For this reason, it is the emotional level, the music itself, that makes the text come alive. I trust that the mood of the music will not mislead the listener.

**How far do you push the boundaries of performability in the piece?**

God forbid! My aim is the opposite. I did not want to compose something so new, so different, so difficult that no one has ever done before! There are many pieces that want to be different

so much – they all end up being similar, obviously. I thought I had never written a choral texture this light before, but I was wrong. Maybe intonationally this piece of music is lighter indeed than what I usually compose, but rhythmically I was going a bit too far. When a familiar pulsation turns into a pace shortening, it all becomes a bit more jerky, unpredictable, and then slows down. To achieve that feeling takes an awful lot of work from the performers.

**I suppose in your head the music is all in one – what is it like to hear it stitched together?**

I am content now. When I heard it for the first time yesterday, it felt disastrous. I think no composer should ever set foot at the first rehearsal! (laughs) I am used to it. I know it always starts like that. I wanted to hear my work earlier for the first time than the concert, because that is the part I hate the most. Today's performance was incomparably more focused than the first rehearsal.

**I was charmed by this music.**

Really?

**I find it very likeable.**

That would be the goal, actually.





# FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE

On 1 September 2021, I introduced the centenary events at the Centenary Academic Year Opening Ceremony. We wanted to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Royal Hungarian Elisabeth University of Sciences in Pécs, which had to leave Bratislava after the Trianon Peace Treaty. We launched a diverse, two-year programme on campus with the motto, *From the Past to the Future*. In addition to preserving traditions and exploring the lesser known history of our university, this motto illustrated how our innovative responses to future challenges would also be part of the festivities. Please allow me to give a sense of the diversity by highlighting some of the events that took place to mark the centenary.

Two years ago on this day, the Janus University Theatre performed the play *I'm Taking It with Me*, a modern adaptation of transition and change. They recalled how, after two years of searching for a location following the Trianon Peace Treaty, Pécs was liberated from Serbian occupation and finally became a suitable city for this university to be established.

On the occasion of festive events, we frequently organize scientific conferences. I could name several, but the two-day conference titled *Klebelberg and His Era: Hungarian Higher Education between the Two World Wars*, which took place in October 2022, is definitely worth mentioning. During this event, we commemorated the period when the University of Pécs started to operate again. This spring, we dedicated a symposium to the memory of Queen Elisabeth. We hosted a conference entitled *Borderless Communities – Diaspora*, which offered an opportunity to collaborate with international guests.

Our most important tasks at this university are to educate students, introduce students to academics, and identify student talent. To meet these objectives, this year in the spirit of the centenary the Board of the National Council of Student Research

Societies (OTDT) organized three National Conferences of Student Research Societies. This is also a tradition, as we held three meetings in 2017 as well. We have successfully implemented these events.

We also produced a video series with more than 60 episodes, in which the leaders of the university and the city greet our university, and some of our distinguished colleagues remember former professors and events in the university's past. These films are available from at the website of the University of Pécs and the PTE1367 YouTube channel. We recently created a topography map and application to explore the university's history and the most important sites of higher education in Pécs, both in medieval and modern times.

In the autumn of 2021, we harvested grapes which are used to make Erzsébet wine. To mark the occasion, we had the opportunity to officially open the modern showroom of our Research Institute of Viticulture and Oenology. The new building of the Medical School was planned and constructed in the spirit of the centenary. The new building of the Dental Sciences Building is also part of this forward-looking modernization. All of these are crucial steps in development, as the university is operating in the 21st century and it is constantly renewing itself as it prepares for the future.

The centenary will close on 14 October with the unveiling of the centenary memorial plaque, and in the evening we will say goodbye to the first century of modern higher education with a 1920's-style university ball to start the next one together. We can toast our achievements so far and our planned future successes with UP Erzsébet wine at the ball!

Vivat, Crescat, Floreat, Universitas Quinqueecclesiensis.

*Speech by Dr. Tamás Fedeles, vice rector  
for education, on 1 September 2021*



Martina Aknai-Kiss 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

# WELCOME! SELAMAT DATANG!

40 Indonesian students have the chance to spend the autumn semester of the 2023/24 academic year at Pécs.



The Indonesian students arrived a little timid but also very excited at the Opening Ceremony, where Dr. Gyöngyi Pozsgai, head of the Study Abroad and Summer School Office and Dr. István Tarrósy, director of the International Centre gave them a warm welcome and invited them to join the family photo shoot. *We are very proud that the University of Pécs is part of the scholarship of excellence organized by the Indonesian government, the Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards (IISMA) programme for the third time this year – emphasized Dr. István Tarrósy.*

The students came from 11 different Indonesian universities and traveled more than 10,000 kilometers to spend the autumn

semester at a university that ranks high in international higher education rankings. This year 500 universities from all over the world applied for the scholarship programme, launched by the Indonesian government in 2021, but only 130 of them were chosen as host institutions.

The IISMA Excellence Program is one of the most significant scholarship programs in the world. This year the Indonesian government is providing scholarships for 1700 students and 5000 next year to study for a semester at internationally significant institutions.

At the Opening Ceremony Dr. István Tarrósy briefly presented the history of the university and the city, highlighted their importance in the fields of

education, culture and science. At the same time, he encouraged the students to get involved as much as possible in the life of Pécs and the university, to participate in as many academic and leisure programmes as possible, for example in the International Evening. *The University of Pécs first of all is about you, the students, about the active student life, and it is about a lot of important knowledge, science and culture related activities and researches – shared Dr. István Tarrósy.*

The students who have arrived take part in the courses offered by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Health Sciences during the autumn semester.



# PÉCS SUMMER SCHOOL: 120% ENTHUSIASM

Éva Harka 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

The International Centre of the University of Pécs offered six summer school programs for the summer of 2023. Three of them have been organized simultaneously in July, when the University of Pécs hosted 120 students from 5 continents and 22 countries. The three summer schools provided joint programs as well, where all of the participants could meet.





*Quiz Evening were a great experience for the students. It was a great pleasure for them to participate in joint programs with students from all over the world – added Dr. Gyöngyi Pozsgai. At the Quiz Night, for example, there were no teams from the same country.*

At the quiz event, which filled the grand lecture hall of the Faculty of Law completely, all teams wanted to win, they tried to give the best of their knowledge to be able to answer serious and less serious questions. Some of the questions were about to the European Union, e.g. where the European Parliament is located or what the founding states were of the federation. For the musical part, among other things, the Ode to Joy had to be recognized, which caused spontaneous waves in the rows of participants, and a little later young people from 22 countries sang together from Oasis' Wonderwall – aimed somewhat at each other – *Because maybe you're going to be the one who saves me.*

Speaking of saving someone: even at such a light-hearted event, we could feel that these young people are not only open, but also truly want to save the world. *It was also a great pleasure for us to see how open and respectful each other's cultures were with students from 5 continents. At the Intercultural Evening, they themselves stated that they would like to gain as much knowledge about each culture as possible in order to be more accepting and supportive,* said Dr. Gyöngyi Pozsgai.

### One hundred and twenty participants from 5 continents

In July, 40 students arrived from ESIEA University in France to attend four weeks of English language and intercultural training offered by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The European Studies Summer School attracted students from all over the world. They study European economy, politics, history, culture, and art history for two weeks. The Erasmus BIP summer school organized for students of the EDUC university association and the University of Pécs explored current issues of social ecology. In addition to classes, students also conducted field exercises at two civil communities in Pécs.

*In addition to classes, we also provided a wide variety of cultural programs for students, with the aim of getting to know the city of Pécs, the region and gaining an intercultural experience of a lifetime.*

*The programs included Quiz Evening, Intercultural Evening, Evening of Hungarian Flavours, wine tasting, museum visit, and excursion to Orfű-Abaliget, said Dr. Gyöngyi Pozsgai, Head of the Study Abroad and Summer School Office of the UP International Centre.*

### Intertwined cultural patterns

*Our goal was also to organize joint programs for students of parallel summer schools. The Intercultural Evening and the European Union*

### 7 years of Pécs Summer School

The Pécs Summer School program was launched in 2016 by the then Centre of Foreign Affairs with the



aim of organizing an increasing number of summer schools at the University of Pécs every year. The main goal was to create the so-called *Summer Trimester* to enrich the summer with more and more international summer school programs in various subject areas. After successful summer programs, more and more students return to UP for semester-length training or even full degree programs. Due to the increasing number of summer university programs, UP has become a market leader among Hungarian higher education institutions in this field as well.

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**The courses are attended by students of foreign partner universities as well as students of UP. Academic programs are provided by different faculties, while programs are fully organized by the International Centre's Study Abroad and Summer School Office.**

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# THE WORLD IS AT YOUR FEET

Five years ago, something extraordinary began in Pécs: a series of events that allow you to learn about even distant cultures without leaving the city. This is the International Seasons.

Éva Harka  Szabolcs Csontos



The aim of the event series is to present the culture and values of the countries and ethnic groups represented by the nearly 5,000 international students studying at the university to the citizens of Pécs, as well as to introduce Hungarian culture and traditional Hungarian values to foreign students studying at UP. In this spirit, 90 intercultural programs have been organized in the past year, including educational and scientific lectures, professional conferences, concerts of pop, classical and folk music, dance perfor-

mances, fine art exhibitions, workshops and sports programs.

For years, it has been a tradition to organize a Korean Day. One of the biggest hits of 2023 grew out of this: it is a course that can also be taken for a campus credit, which was created with the support of the Eurasia Foundation. *Super speakers are coming from South Korea, great experts from prestigious universities, with which we hope to strengthen our ties through this course. Let me emphasize: this course is not online. The Korean speakers will all travel to Pécs,*

*will be present in person, and will also be open to talking to students at the end of their presentations,* said Dr. István Tarrósy, director of International Centre, about the course.

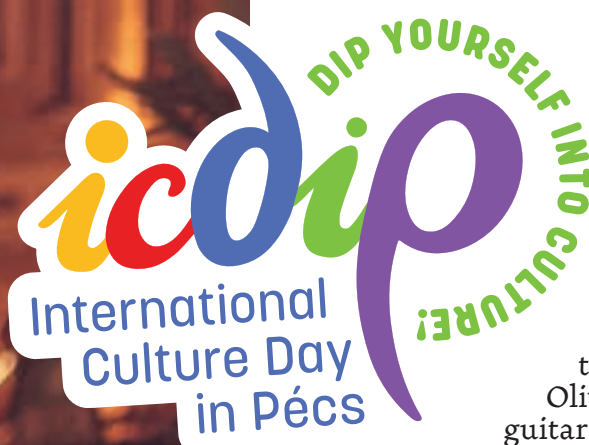
Detailed information about all International Seasons programs can be found on their Facebook page, but their YouTube channel is also interesting because most events can be watched back there. The International Seasons and the Pécs Summer School Program Won the Hungarian Marketing Association's Diamond Award.



Is there an international program that  
you would like to go to, but no one has organized yet?  
Would you like to introduce where you are from?  
Do you have a good idea?  
Sharing is caring!

Contact the International Seasons organizers:  
[internationalseasons@pte.hu](mailto:internationalseasons@pte.hu)





# icdip

DIP YOURSELF INTO CULTURE!

## International Culture Day in Pécs

The city of Pécs and the International Centre of the University of Pécs organized the International Culture Day in Pécs for the second time in 2023. The event was part of the Pécs Days and International Seasons festivals.

The festival atmosphere was set by a joint production by the UP Dance Ensemble and the PEAC Cheerleading team. The performance was a combination of dance and cheerleading.

Olívér Zrínyi, a student of classical guitar at the UP Faculty of Music and

Visual Arts, performed next. He was accompanied by Attila Janó, student and singer. Zrínyi is also a talented cook, and his recipe for North Macedonian meat pie can be found in a recent cookbook (Next 50 Delicacies on Earth) published by the University of Pécs.

Erual, a 22-year-old singer-songwriter from the University of Rennes (which is a partner university at the EDUC Alliance), was one of the evening's star performers. She was awarded the *À vous de jouer!* talent development program at the University of Rennes in 2020, and then released her debut album *Cité soleil* in 2022. Her music took the audience in Pécs to a world of flowers and sunshine.



# DELICIOUS DIVERSITY

The University of Pécs has published a new international cookbook, thus expanding the unique recipe collection of the institution to two volumes. Before the first edition, there was no other book published by the university that summarised the gastronomic diversity of so many countries in Hungarian and English. The new volume was presented in September 2023 at Trafik in Pécs, accompanied by a tasting menu.

Martina Aknai-Kiss 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

The new volume in the recipe book series is titled **NEXT 50 DELICACIES ON EARTH**, but as opposed to the more complex main course recipes of the first book, it focuses on soups, salads and desserts. However, the aim has not changed: to get to know the gastronomic culture, tastes and special dishes of the students from more than 130 countries who come to Pécs.

*It is symbolic that the second university cookbook is being published in the Centenary year, said Dr. Attila Miseta, Rector of the University of Pécs. Dr. István Tarósy, director of the International Centre, said: in 2019, the University of Pécs has produced a cookbook that shows how gastronomy is an essential part of the internationalisation process. The easiest possible way to bring different cultures together is to sit at the table and learn about each other's cultures through food, exchanging ideas while eating it, and getting even closer together.*

*Dr. Miklós Nyitrai, Dean of the Medical School, said: One of the keys to the success of a book is its quality. This required chef Ákos*





*Lokodi to prepare these dishes in collaboration with the students, and photographer Lajos Kalmár to take sharp, accurate pictures of the process. For me, the two cookbooks also have symbolic significance:*

*they reflect the diverse student and, we hope, in time, teaching community that characterises the University of Pécs.*

*As with the first edition, the editors of the book announced a*

*recipe competition in the autumn of 2022 among the 5,000 foreign students and 17,000 Hungarian students studying at the University of Pécs, and then selected the fifty that would eventually find their way into the publication. It was a very easy task, the students were happy to send us their recipes, and we had to make a lot of choices, said Anikó Berta, the book's creator. She said that the idea for the cookbook came to her after a kind gesture from international students. When the students left the university at the end of their studies, they gave her the recipes of the dishes they had prepared at the International Evening, because they knew that as organisers of the event they would never have the chance to taste them.*

*The students prepared their recipes with the help of chef Lokodi Ákos in the Faculty of Health Sciences' kitchen. The biggest challenge, apart from being able to prepare the recipes in the time we had, was organising everything. At the same time, there were some dishes that were a challenge for me to taste, as they were so far from my palate, Lokodi confessed. Among the book's props were nearly 150 ceramics, hand-made in Tyrol, that were made especially for the occasion, added Lajos Kalmár, the cookbook's photographer, who gave a behind-the-scenes insight.*

*At the event, the participants of the book presentation were treated to a four-course menu composed of recipes from the cookbook, and the gastronomic experience was rounded off with wines from the University of Pécs Wine Estate.*





## Soup

Bahtiyar Yıldız, a psychology student at the Faculty of Humanities, came from Turkey. Turkish cuisine has a wide variety of flavours, from sour to spicy, and each region has its characteristic dish. For the book, Bahtiyar has chosen a recipe for the popular fried rice pudding, sütlaç, and yayla corbasi soup, which his mother often makes:

*I wanted to present something light but delicious from Turkish gastronomy on the pages of the book. The soup is yogurt-based and can be eaten hot or cold.*

## Appetizer

Tanusha Baijnath represented the cuisine of Mauritius, famous for its cultural diversity. With her beetroot salad recipe, she wanted to offer a nutritious meal for those who regularly struggle with how to eat healthily on busy days. *As a sixth year medical student, I have been challenged from the first year onwards with what to cook.*

*Since I know other students are in the same boat, as soon as I heard about the recipe competition, I thought it would be a good idea to enter with a quick and easy-to-prepare meal, Tanusha stressed.*

## Main course

Macedonian-born Oliver Zrinyi is currently studying classical guitar at the Faculty of Music and Visual Arts and has already played at several festivals in Pécs, most recently at the International Cultural Day in Pécs (ICDiP). Macedonians eat bread with almost everything, so Oliver entered with a bread-based meat pie, his Pastrmajli. The main ingredients of a meat pie are bread and meat. *As I hadn't come across this dish in Hungary before, but all the ingredients are available, I thought why not make it here, Oliver said.*

## Dessert

Catarina Vairinhos, a medical student at the University of Pécs, entered the competition with

a recipe for the world-famous Portuguese dessert pastel de nata, which is unique in that it was originally made by monks from the Monastery of St Jerome in Lisbon. Since 1937, however, only the Fábrica de Pastéis de Belém has been able to produce it under the name pastel de Belém, using the original recipe. *I love to cook, it's one of my hobbies, and making desserts is my passion, so I entered a recipe for a very typical Portuguese dessert, said Catarina.*

**The book can be bought at the**  
**[pteshop.hu](https://pteshop.hu)**



# A DASH OF TURKISH

At the time of the creation of the Next 50 Delicacies on Earth international recipe book of the University of Pécs, Bahtiyar Yıldız, from Turkey was in the final year of his MA in Psychology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. After his graduation, he has been studying at the Phd program at the University of Pécs. I asked him about the dishes he shared in the project and his time in Pécs.

## What is your topic for the Phd?

Astraphobia, the fear of storms, lightning, and thunder. There is some research on it, but not as common as other phobias. Now we are working on some projects with my supervisor, and I am gathering materials and reading. We will do some behavioral experiments with virtual reality to reduce the symptoms of these fears.

## May I ask why did you choose this topic especially?

During my master's studies, I had some clients from Turkey under the supervision of my professors. One of the clients had an extreme fear of thunder, and lightning, checking the forecast repeatedly. We did something related to behavioral therapy under the supervision of my professors in Turkey. I kept reading about this. There were a few articles, but not as detailed as I would have liked. So, I thought to have this topic as my research.

Mariann Tóth  Szabolcs Csontos



### How do you like Pécs so far?

I am in my first year in the Phd, I have been living in Pécs for the last two years, and I love it! Some of my friends in Budapest kept insisting on me moving to Budapest as there are more opportunities, which is true. But I like the Pécs better than Budapest because it is quieter. You have got all the necessary things that you want. If you want to party, you can go out. All the things that you need, you can find it here. It is much cleaner than Budapest. I like Pécs, I am happy here!

### How did you decide to participate in the international cookbook project?

I received the information on how to participate and because I have not done anything outside my studies at the university, I thought, why not do this? I did some socializing activities, getting in touch with the others. Cooking is something that I like, so it was a good opportunity for me to introduce Yayla çorbası soup and Sütlaç, a dessert, which are not that well-known outside of Turkey.

### Do you cook often?

I cook for myself at home most of the time. I consider cooking as a sign of independence from childhood. I started living by myself in Turkey, then abroad, so I had to cook for myself, and I enjoyed putting on some music or some shows. It depends on my mood, but usually listen to some songs from musicals, like Mamma Mia or The Greatest Showman and so on, which hype me up. Sometimes I just put on some TV shows in either Turkish or English, mostly

comedy TV shows, because I do not have to listen to everything, but when I listen, I get to laugh. So, I enjoy my time in the kitchen.

### Did you know right away what you wanted to cook for the project?

It took some time to figure that out. I wanted to introduce something less well-known. The dessert is somewhat similar to Greece, and Hungary (tejberizs), and in Portugal I saw something like Sütlaç. As for the soup, it has yogurt in it, which is not very common. In Turkey, we consume a lot of yogurt. My mom cooks Yayla çorbası soup quite often. You can consume this soup cold in the summer or warm in the winter. I prefer to have it cold or warmish cold. So, I thought these recipes would be worth sharing with the others, and this is what inspired me.

### How well-known are these dishes in Turkey?

I came up with another dessert, a pumpkin dessert that we consume, especially in the autumn. However, Anikó Berta suggested that it would be a better idea to do Sütlaç, a typical Turkish dish. There are two ways to make it. We chose to cook them and then put them in little pots and then put them in the oven until they turned golden brown on top. I like that version more, and they turned out very well.

Turkey is huge and every region has their own traditional dishes. I would say this soup is more common in the Western and Mediterranean parts of Turkey. The dessert is common in almost every region, but it is most common in the Western part and

the Mediterranean part as well. And as you go east, the food gets spicier, and the desserts get more syrupy, like baklava and so on.

### Do you have a message for your fellow students?

People are always thinking about what others will think about them, and this is something that discourages them from taking action. This also happened to me when I was thinking about what to write in the book or how to do the dishes. I thought maybe the other Turkish people would somehow judge me, which has not happened so far, at least, but this is not something up to them. It was my own experience, and it was something more than I thought it would be. I got to meet new friends. I had socialized with them. I got to know other people, and so what I would say to them is just do not take a step back as long as you want to do something, just do it! I did not take many opportunities during my studies here. This was the one thing before I finished my master's. I am still here, which is a lucky thing for me. So, whenever you get a chance for anything in life, just take it as an opportunity.

### Do you have any advice for someone who wants to cook the dishes you recommended?

Just be careful with the water temperature when you cook it. Do not put the water in right away. Mix it slowly with the hot ingredients, then pour it in. That is the essential part of it.



Éva Harka  Szabolcs Csontos

# WHAT DOES UP TASTE LIKE?

Life is sweet at the University of Pécs, and the University of Pécs Public Relations Centre has expressed this through gastronomy.

**W**e wanted to refer to the roots of the University of Pécs, but also – due to the increasing number of international students studying here – to show some of the typical flavours of Hungary as well. We asked one of the most innovative confectioneries in the city to be partner with us and to help us realize our ideas, says Zoltán Györffy, director of the Public Relations Centre. It was a real challenge to depict the diversity of the University of Pécs, says pastry chef Ádám Frey, head of Frey Confectionery. The development process of the sweets was also supported by tasting focus groups made up of UP citizens. The two purposes manifested themselves in a round Fleur-de-lis-shaped cookie with

almond and plum, and in an ice cream with matching flavor. The aim was also to make the cookie transportable, easy to package and store, and gluten-free, so that as many people as possible could enjoy it.

**The ice cream and biscuits are available at Frey Confectionery, but the latter is also available at the [pteshop.hu](https://pteshop.hu) website.**



QR: [facebook.com/freycukraszda](https://facebook.com/freycukraszda)





Crunchy almond shavings, crumbly almond paste, distinctive plum flavour. A meeting of vibrant red and clean off-white in the elegant Fleur-de-lis. Large portion. Bite into the history of the university!

# SWEET-FRAGRANT FRUIT OF THE UNIVERSITY

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A turning point at the Pécs University Wine Estate: in addition to the wines, the institution has also started to focus on culinary grapes, based on the idea of Dr. Péter Teszlák, Research Director of the Research Institute of Viticulture and Oenology.  
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Éva Harka  Szabolcs Csontos

## **What are the trends in dessert grapes and what are consumers' expectations?**

The seedlessness, the bunch and berry size, whether the berries are juicy or crunchier, how thick the skin is... There is also a wide range of flavours, aromas and fragrances. Hundreds of new varieties of table grapes are bred every year, and the market is constantly changing. Before we started to focus on dessert grapes, I thought it was important that Hungary should not be left too much behind in this

process. At the Research Institute of Viticulture and Oenology, we had already taken the first steps in the field of table grapes, and Zoltán Madaras – who as an economist also saw the potential – strongly supported the idea. Due to his support two professional events were dedicated to table grapes and a Culinary Grape Ecological Garden was established.

I think it is strategic to promote dessert grapes as a healthy fruit, but it is worthwhile to know that table grapes are not mass products. Grape was a

luxury in ancient cultures and, although no longer unaffordable, it is still a luxury today. In Hungary, the growing conditions are favourable, and today's drier and warmer climate with irrigation allows for optimal table grape production.

## **To what extent do table grapes require different care than wine grapes?**

Table grapes require a different support system, more manual labour, more precise work, for example during pruning, cut-



ting, leafing and other special interventions. The Viticulture-Oenology course at the University of Pécs started in 2016, and at that time no Hungarian training focused particularly on culinary grapes – now there is a reorganization in this field as well.

**At the exhibition, there was a lot of talk about how important it is to get the berries evenly ripe inside the cluster. How can we buy fully ripe grapes?**

As a layman, it is very difficult to tell! The buyer should know the exact characteristics of the grape. The best you can do is to judge by its colour. But a deep green coloured berry can be sweeter than a yellow one, there is a huge difference in varieties. Tasting can give you a clue, but packaged bunches are always blind bargains. The bunches are different even within a single vineyard. How would it be possible all the bunches of grapes selected at random from a gigantic harvest be evenly ripe?

**How can someone get dessert grapes or grafted vines from the University of Pécs?**

We have started selling table grapes via the [pteshop.hu](https://pteshop.hu) website. The recently inaugurated garden will have a steady yield in three years, and from then on we can expect a larger quantity. Our aim is to provide good quality, affordable and healthy fruit for the citizens of the university. In the near future, it will be possible to order grafted vines with detailed variety descriptions via the website.



## II. Dessert grape exhibition and fair

Two hundred types of fruit could be tasted at the II. Gourmet wine exhibition and fair, on the last hot weekend of August 2023 at the Szentmiklós Hill site of the Viticulture and Oenology Research Institute. The largest was László Kulicz's 2.67 kilogram cluster, the largest berry in the seedless category weighed 16 grams, and the largest berry in the seeded category weighed 25.2 grams. As for the taste: the best grape was the *Valek*, grown by János Bukovics in Szigetvár, with a muscaty, clean taste and oval, amber coloured berries.



### Culinary Grape Eco Garden

Growing more than 700 environmentally friendly, sustainable table grapes on the half-hectare site on Magyarürögi str., Research Institute of Viticulture and Enology conducts research in order to boost competitive and healthy Hungarian dessert grape cultivation that leaves a smaller ecological footprint.

# THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS AT THE WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES!

The University of Pécs at the World University Games! The University of Pécs was represented in three sports at this year's World University Games in Chengdu, China, between 28 July and 8 August.

Éva Harka  Hungarian University and College Sports Association

The first World Inter-University Championships were held in Turin, Italy, in 1959. The main organizer of the event is the FISU, which in 2020 changed the former name 'universiade' to 'Summer World University Games'. 2023 was the 31st such event, preceded by an enforced hiatus due to the coronavirus epidemic. This year, the World Games were to have been held in Ekaterinburg, but the Russian-Ukrainian war cancelled this. It is for this reason that this year's event in Chengdu is widely referred to as the 2021 World University Games, the organizers have turned back the clock!





## CHENGDU AND THE RESULTS

The venue for this year's World Games was the provincial capital of south-west China, Chengdu. The city of more than sixteen million people has a special quarter for athletes, with a residential area, huge training halls, gift shops and grocery stores. The event also had a mascot: a giant panda, Rongbao.

The Summer World University Games was opened with amazing fireworks and spectacular dancing, and the closing ceremony was scheduled to last 70 minutes, with 600 actors and actresses to bid farewell to the audience. In Chengdu, 9,500 stu-

dents from 120 nations competed in 18 sports.

In terms of medals won, China took the first place on the medal table, followed by Japan in second place and South Korea in third. The Hungarian delegation finished in 17th place overall.

### LINKS TO PÉCS

In basketball, Nóra Wentzel strengthened the Hungarian women's university basketball team. Hungary finished fifth, we played the last game against Poland and won 64-52. One of the outstanding players of the

game was, to our great pride, the 22-year-old Nóra Wentzel, who scored 13 points in the game against Poland alone.

In judo, Brigitta Varga took to the court in UP colours, 63 kg. Unfortunately, she did not manage to win a medal in China this time, but she was among the best 16.

As for table tennis: most of the students of the University of Pécs were involved in this sport, as the backbone of the Hungarian university national team is made up of athletes from here! Team leader Gábor Orosz said: *We knew that the World Games would be a high*



level competition and a challenge for us. It was clear from the start that our best chance of achieving a good result would be as a team, and with this in mind we were keen to progress from our group and reach the last 8, and then play

from the groups, which three of us managed to do. Our fourth player Dominik Mihalovity won two of his three matches, we can not complain about his performance at all. The group matches are not easy either, there was no easy

### **Proud Hungarians, representing the colours of Pécs**

It was an unforgettable experience for our athletes to play for the University of Pécs at such a big event. Gábor Orosz said: The opening ceremony, where the Hungarian delegation paraded with national flags in front of 40,000 people; the hall, which can accommodate 10,000 fans; the fact that our athletes could play in front of more than half the crowd on the very first day; to feel the organizers doing everything they can to make the everybody comfortable; to see how organized they are; to feel the love of the locals, to see that every second they ask for photos and signatures, not only from the biggest stars, but from everyone, is a memory that will last a lifetime for everyone present! We would like to thank all who contributed to this, who made it possible for us to participate! I also hope that this is a good message, a call to high school athletes, table tennis players, that it is worth pursuing sport and studies in parallel,

an exciting quarter-final against one of our Asian opponents. Unfortunately, this was only partially achieved.

We started the tournament with a bang, winning all three of our group matches, beating Cyprus, a very strong Slovakian team and Korea, who are ranked much higher than us – the latter is a huge feat in itself! Unfortunately, our group qualification did not mean an immediate quarter-final. We had one more clash for a place in the last 8. We were unlucky to get Hong Kong as our last opponent, who were much more powerful than us. We did our best, yet we could not beat them.

It is even harder to do well in the singles and doubles, there is no easy opponent in such a prestigious competition! The doubles competition did not go as planned, and this was probably our only defeat during the whole competition against a slightly weaker opponent. The “minimum expectation” in the singles was to qualify

opponent, every win was a brace. Dávid Molnár and Erik Huzsvár didn't manage it this time, but Sebestyén Kovács finished among the best 32.

In my opinion, this is still an outstanding result, it was a good conclusion to this magnificent



multisport event, I am proud of the play, attitude and performance of all players!

at a high level, because everyone can be enriched by such experiences through university sport.



# SHINY MEDALS OF SUMMER!

The athletes of the University of Pécs excelled at the European Universities Championships, which were organized by the European University Sports Association (EUSA) in different cities across the continent in the summer of 2023. Let us see what the UP team came home with!

## Table tennis

*Silver in men's team and bronze in women's doubles for the UP table tennis team at this year's championships in Olomouc. The boys showed great team spirit and fighting spirit. It was a real team effort, everyone played their part in the success. In women's doubles, Helga Dari and Dóra Jankus won a beautiful bronze medal, which was a huge surprise and a fantastic achievement! – said team leader Gábor Orosz.*

## Badminton

The UP badminton team finished in sixth place at the European University Championships in Miskolc. *We did what we had to do, we did well, but we lost to a stronger team, last year's champions. I think this is a good result, I am proud of everyone! – said team manager Dr. Miklós Végh.* With this sixth place, the UP badminton team became the best Hungarian team and improved five places on last year's result!

## Water polo

The EUSA Water Polo Championships were held in Miskolc, where UP qualified for the first time with a silver medal at the ME-FOB. The UP Water Polo Team, with its members from PVSZK

Mecsek Fűszért and UP PEAC Mighty Bulls, was only beaten by the strongest team. Coach Gergely Lukács said: *It was good to see the players from different divisions, playing in the colours of Pécs, coming together and forming a strong cohesion. We are proud to be celebrating the centenary year by winning medals in all the events we competed in.* It was a particular pleasure to see Márton Keresztúri, member of the UP's team receive the Most Valuable Player award for the whole championship.

## Futsal

The European University Futsal Championship was held in Split this year. 19 teams competed, many of them with national team players and great experience. Our team was drawn into the group of death. Some of our initial opponents finished among the best three. The UP team finished the tournament in 13th place. *Six games, three wins, three losses, 28-23 goal difference. Our performance goes beyond our ranking, we will use the lessons learned in NB1.*







*We have experienced where this sport is going on a European scale and one thing is for sure: it is very popular all over the continent! – said team leader József Hári.*



## Martial arts

In judo, three UP athletes were our hope in Zagreb. Unfortunately, in the 52 kg weight category, Fatime Beringer could not repeat last year's podium success. However, Brigitta Varga in 63 kg and Dávid Naji in 60 kg came home with bronze medals! *Last year was my first time at a major university competition, and I was looking forward to getting out of my comfort zone a bit – said Brigitta Varga. It was my first time at a university event of this type. The field is similar to the international ones – everyone wants to win – but it's not as tense, commented Dávid Naji. And another shining star: Alexander Klassen won a bronze medal in kickboxing!*

## Cheerleading

The UP PEAC Cheerleading team came home from the ICU European Championships in Verona, Italy, with no medals, but new fans and experiences. *Hats off to the team! I am very proud of their performance in both the jazz and hip hop categories! We have only been in the international competition circuit for half a year and we were very happy to be present at*

*the European Championships, says Dr. Beatrix Bánkyné Perjés, Head of the Cheerleading of UP PEAC.*







# MEETING PIONEERS OF GLOBAL TOURISM AT ITHAS 2023

We interviewed our student, András Pallós (Tourism and catering BSc programme, Faculty of Business and Economics) about his experiences on the International Tourism and Hospitality Academy at Sea study trip to Croatia. The focus topic of this year's ITHAS was "cultural heritage sites", so the programme aimed to give the participants the opportunity to get an insight into the practical challenges and problems to be solved in the field of cultural heritage tourism.

## **What were your motivations and expectations when you applied?**

I thought it would be like any short period Erasmus mobility I have been participating in before. Therefore, I thought it would be mainly about making friends and having fun, so all in all I expected less professional work. So, I would like to emphasize that it was very valuable professionally! So many professional experts were invit-

ed, I never thought I would meet them in person.

## **Tell us about the application process. There were quite a lot of applications, from which 9 students were finally selected.**

There was an interview at the beginning: It was about how suitable you were to represent the Faculty, the University professionally, but at the same time how extroverted you are for net-

working with others. After that, we were called in for a meeting quite soon, where we were given details of the trip and how to apply for this short-term Erasmus mobility, so our participation was completely free of charge, and we even received a green travel grant because we went to Croatia by bus. Of course, with a grant like this, you must know that you have to write reports afterwards, maybe even give an oral presentation.



**Please tell us a little about the project you were working through the week.**

There were smaller and larger projects and tasks, so there were some that focused on the lecture and some larger projects. It is important to note that we were assigned to 3 separate ships and the ships formed a team. These teams were mixed, so those of us who came from the same School were split up and there were Hungarian students on all 3 boats. The 3 teams competed with each other; I could compare it a bit to the freshmen's camp.

There were two major "competitions" at the end of the week: one was a photo collection (which we won, by the way) and each team had to learn a Croatian song during the week, which was about 4 minutes. I do not speak Croatian, I have to tell you, but the Germans and Canadians probably struggled with the pronunciation even more than I did. We also had to do a choreography to this music and that made up the final night, where the teams did a 5–10-minute show. Everyone's performance was fantastic and of very high quality.

**You have mentioned that the trip gave you a lot professionally, as a tourism student, what benefits do you see from your participation?**

As I mentioned, we were invited and lectured by such professional authorities. Some people can say they once met Justin Timberlake in concert, but we can say we met pioneers of global tourism! Professors from all over the world came to the programme, for

example from Australia or even from Thailand.

It was also very interesting that even older professors could capture your attention with their lecturing style! We thought that the environment would distract us, because the lectures took place on the upper sundeck of the ship – which were headed to the Kornati Islands. But still, I think that we were able to learn more than if we had been sitting at the school desk.

**Can you highlight something you have learned there and took home with you?**

Two things. One is that it has been a huge motivation for me to get engaged in tourism. I was not sure before that this was the path for me, but now I am very motivated by it, I see my future in the tourism and hospitality industry! The other is that I had an outstanding experience that I will always remember.



# #UPFAMILY

The number of foreign students studying at the University of Pécs has doubled in the past ten years. We interviewed Rebeka Varga, the international alumni coordinator of the International Centre of the University of Pécs about the international alumni system and its future prospects.

Martina Aknai-Kiss 📷 Szabolcs Csontos, Lajos Kalmár





**What is the function of the international alumni system?**

I think it is important that we do not let students go after they have studied here. We should let them know that they are important to us, that we can tell them new things, show them new things, and that we are interested in what has happened to them, where they are going, and how their lives have turned out. In the long term, the international alumni members can help a lot with recruitment, spreading the good things about the University of Pécs, and bringing information about the programs with them.

**What form do you use to keep in touch with the members?**

The final form is still being developed. For now, we are trying

to assess our opportunities and needs. Since most of the students return home after their studies, this is not easy.

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**The long-term plan is to launch an online platform similar to LinkedIn, where members can communicate with us and with each other, even with a member search function, so that they can easily find each other based on year, faculty, etc.**

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We try to meet our alumni personally at international higher education fairs and exhibitions. We organize meetings and discussions, and with their presence and reports, they support recruitment.

Typically, we keep in touch by email, but we also inform them on LinkedIn and Facebook about what is happening at the University of Pécs, what they can participate in, and how they can stay in touch with us. The goal is to see what has happened to them, where they have gone, and to spread the good word about the University of Pécs. We are working on a digital newsletter, but regardless, we always inform those living in the region where we can meet.

**Is there a plan or has there been a precedent for inviting an alumni member to give a lecture?**

We definitely want to do this, but it is partly difficult to involve them due to the distances. We had a larger survey to find out what the members need and want. Many of the respondents answered that they would be happy to return to Pécs, even for an alumni meeting.

Not so long ago, we announced an informal conversation that took place online as part of a webinar. *Samuel Akinola*, who was an International Student Ambassador at our university, also participated in this. He graduated from the Faculty Business and Economics and. Samuel is currently working in the President's Student Leadership Program at the University of Manitoba in Canada and is doing important student representation work. In other words, he continued the kind of community building that he did here. I think he looks back on this activity positively, which is why he took part in the webinar when we invited him.

**What else has been received in feedback that you could help the members with?**

I think the most important thing for them is networking. However, they shared with us that a career counseling service would also be useful for them at different stages of their lives. For beginners, how to write a good CV, how to prepare for a job interview. If they lose their job, how to deal with it as best as possible mentally and from a career perspective. In other words, they have an absolute



need for this kind of service, and they would like to hear from each other, so we are thinking about such services, as well as additional webinars where they can also learn something new.

**Do you plan to extend the current discounts by involving international partner institutions?**

We are trying to contact new partners, as the current discounts can only be used here. It would be good to offer something that is available everywhere, which they can also use when they return home. It now seems that we will be able to extend the existing

Emirates discounts to alumni members. However, my impression from the webinar was that international members do not primarily expect discounts from the alumni system. For them, it is more about belonging.

**How do alumni members participate in international higher education fairs?**

In the spring, an alumnus who was previously a student at the Medical School helped at the fair held in Cyprus. He lived in Pécs for his entire medical education and also learned Hungarian. He was a great help, because not every parent feels comfortable

speaking English, but there was someone next to us who spoke English, Hungarian, and Greek as well. So he was able to tell firsthand, in Greek, why it is good to come here to study, what he liked the most, and what it added to his life. In the meantime, he asked us about his former teachers, whether they were still teaching, and how they were doing. In the spring, we managed to contact many alumni in Indonesia. They were very helpful and supported the recruitment process. When such a group meets, we have dinner or coffee together so they can talk to each other and reminisce, while we tell them what is new at the university and in the city.

**We count on you to help us to build a strong alumni community at the University of Pécs!**

***Become a lifelong member  
of the University of Pécs  
Family***

Register on the website: [alumni.pte.hu/en](http://alumni.pte.hu/en)



# THE UP FAMILY CHEERED TOGETHER

The atmosphere was amazing at the Baranya stage of the Tour de Hongrie on 12 May 2023! The University of Pécs also set up cheer headquarters at Széchenyi Square, and the many interested people could encourage the competitors richer with glitter tattoos, fans and thunder sticks.

We were all cheering for the Tour de Hongrie riders so much that the sun shining in our hearts managed to scare away the rain clouds. It could have been a little warmer, but the climb on Bárány Street would have been sweltering nonetheless. At the finish in front of the Pécs Zoo, Marc Hirschi was the first to cross the finish line (also the winner of the this year's Tour de Hongrie!).







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# LIFESAVING FASHION DESIGNER

The talented Nigerian Boluwatife Olagoke, who studied at the BSc in Nursing and Patient Care programme at the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pécs, saved a girl's life just two days after learning CPR from his mother. He came to Hungary within the framework of the Christian Youth Scholarship Program. During his university years, besides his studies, he learned to sew from YouTube, and in his spare time he began designing and making unique garments from colourful African fabrics that combine African and European cultures. In 2021, he unveiled his own brand, Largo Collections, at a fashion show. He was also featured in the 2021 issue of the UnivPécs International magazine. After graduation, he moved to Budapest.



[UNIVPECS.COM/INTERNATIONAL/UNITING\\_CULTURES\\_THROUGH\\_FASHION\\_DESIGN](https://univpecs.com/international/uniting_cultures_through_fashion_design)





# INTERIOR DESIGN STUDENTS HONORED AT LAS VEGAS ARCHITECTURE COMPETITION

One of the highest awards the Interior and Spatial Design MA program of the University of Pécs has received was awarded to master's students participating in the international Builder Architecture Competition. The *Las Vegas Affordable Housing Challenge* competition called for projects that create new ways to reduce housing prices.

**The designers were asked to present a flexible, innovative, pilot-phase concept for affordable housing in Las Vegas.**

One team of students from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology of the University of Pécs, MA in Interior and Spatial Design, received an honorable mention, and the projects of three teams were among the top twenty.

The participants in the competition were asked to provide solutions to the city's housing crisis – to design spaces of various sizes to accommodate families, single individuals, and couples in supported housing in the most creative way possible.

The panel of judges were looking for projects that would break away from typical ideas of housing, design, and the community while also focusing on sustainability and affordability. Participation in the competition was integrated into the semester coursework of first-year Interior and Spatial Design MA students, with the aim of testing themselves in an international competition where they could compete against peers from other universities or even practitioners in their profession.

*Our student community is mainly international and is a very diverse group from all over the world. They will certainly face many of the challenges of the competition during their careers, given that climate change, sustainability and the energy crisis require innovative solutions, so this assignment is modelled on a real-life situation,* says Dr. Ágnes Borsos, Interim Head of the Department of Interior, Applied and Creative Design.

Students who participated in the competition spent a semester in a workshop-style classroom environment developing their design proposal while attending lectures on sustainable architecture. The Las Vegas Affordable Housing Challenge Architecture Competition Honorable Mention was awarded to a team of international architects and interior designers consisting of Gantumur Bujinkham, Lujain Ahmad Mohamada-men and Sara Ardanal Hussein.

*When we first worked as a team, the differences in cultural backgrounds, design approaches and ideas helped us better understand the architectural challenge. As designers, we first look at the problem on a large scale, as a community issue, and try to find solutions on a smaller, individual scale. Our job as architects is to create safe and comfortable living conditions for members of the society so that they can live happily. Participating in competitions is a great opportunity to step out of our comfort zone; the challenge broadens our horizons and develops our creative flair,* said the students summarizing their experience of the competition.





# ASSOCIATIONS ON A BRUTAL SCALE!

..... Anita Flessner is an alumna of three faculties of the University of Pécs (Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Education and Regional Development, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, and Faculty of Music and Visual Arts), an interior designer for a company in the capital, and she is one of the winners of the Carpet I Am competition at the 2023 Zsolnay Light Festival. Her wonderful, swirling carpet of yellow, orange, red and purple lights was enjoyed by hundreds of people during the two days of the festival. I asked her about her studies, career, and of course her creation that was realized in Janus Pannonius Street.

.....

Éva Harka  Szabolcs Csontos

**How did you come to the University of Pécs? Why did you choose the environmental culture major at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Education and Regional Development?**

The program was very interesting, it represented a different direction than what I had learned, seen, or heard before. Environmental culture is a kind of border area, it opens up many possibilities, it encompasses more in terms of design, visualization, and environmental design, but I felt that to deepen my knowledge, I also needed to build on a master's degree in design or architecture. I applied to UP FEIT, where I graduated as a building artist in 2020. I suffered for this master's degree from the point of view that FEIT obviously focuses more on the technical aspects, and I am not of this mindset. For example, I had to work hard and concentrate during the building structure classes: those who do not continue their studies at the master's level after graduating from the undergraduate program there have plenty of catching up to do and to bring in compared to the others. I am very happy that I managed to overcome this, and since then I have been employed as an individual entrepreneur at an interior design company.

**Last February, you applied to the Design and Visual Arts Teacher Master's Program at the Faculty of Music and Visual Arts as well. Why?**

I was also interested in the teaching specialization in connection with the environmental culture major, but it was not available due to some kind of legal change. My drawing teachers had a big

impact on me, and when I saw that the Faculty of Music and Visual Arts had announced the design and visual arts teacher program in postgraduate education, I thought I had to try it even while working!

My classmates were involved in some kind of fine art, I was the only interior designer. I ended up in a team with visual artists, it was a great experience, this period passed in a relaxed atmosphere.

**How did you find the light festival competition?**

I visited the Light Festival in previous years, but I did not know that there was an opportunity for students to apply. Now the call came up on Facebook, I saved it, and I thought about it. Since they said that anyone can apply who is studying art in higher education, that is, there was no specific major or qualification required, so I dared to apply. I found light painting interesting, so I thought I would try my hand at it.

**You cannot be serious! You have no previous experience with light painting?!**

No. (laughs) I have never done light painting in my life, and I knew that it was mainly graphic designers who did it. But I didn't expect anything from the application, I just wanted to try it out. I worked on it at night, when time allowed.

After the application was announced, we were provided with an external mentor to ask for advice and opinions. Bence Farkasinszki, a freelance graphic designer, was the professional mentor and I consulted with him, mainly on technical issues,

because I am not well versed in those. For example, he gave me advice on how to cut the material, because there were several types of projection planes, which required more specialised technical knowledge.

**How did you approach the design?**

I did not know that in previous competitions there was a theme that had to be linked to – this time there was none, you could create anything freely. For this reason, I thought I would start from the memories and associations of the previous Light Festivals. Things like circles, dots, contrasts, crowds, people, movement, flow, guidance, darkness, density came to mind.

I drew these impressions, thickened and thinned the dots and circles, then I created a composition from the sketches, that is, I linked the spots and circles together. The size was scary, it ended up being 9x50 meters! I was also afraid of how much I could fill it, because it is a very large surface. I spent most of my time figuring out how to display the many shapes and colors in this space, and on the people walking in it, so that it would be detailed. In my plan, I also hid smaller elements that could also be interpreted as eyes: purple spots with black dots inside. In my experience, you cannot see who is coming towards you in a crowd at a festival, we do not know who those people are exactly, you can only see flashing pairs of eyes – I wanted to show this. There was one specific, emphasized element, a giant chain motif that ran the entire length of the carpet. Its meaning was twofold. On the one hand, the organizers consciously



try to lead people through certain locations of the festival, they even try to tell them the order in advance, the crowd needs to be directed somewhere during such an event. The chain, on the other hand, would have ironically alluded to something like 'guiding the crowd', the arrangement of individuals into a homogeneous mass.

I think this competition opportunity is also attractive to many people because it is different to show something on such a brutally large scale than when it is squeezed into a small exhibition space! It was amazing how it looks and what effect it has on the audience.

**Picture this: one of my friends thought that a real carpet was laid down on the street be-**

**cause she felt the asphalt felt softer than usual – and it was because of your lights! What was it like to see people lying on your carpet, taking selfies and videos?**

My work was visible twice, on Thursday and Saturday. The first time I saw it, there were so many people that you could not see anything from the carpet, but people were lined up at the wall taking photos. It was so much fun to see everyone picking out the part of my work that matched their personality! Then I returned to the carpet half an hour before lights out and there were fewer people.

Some people were lying on the street! I felt they were enjoying it and it felt good to have made an impact and got them involved in

the piece of my work. I sat down too, and for about half an hour I just watched what people were doing on the carpet. It felt like a huge opportunity to create something for a public space and for such a large crowd.

**What do you think about light painting itself?**

I think that the Zsolnay Light Festival is unique and international, and that it will always have a right to exist at this level or even higher. The way in which light transforms, disrupts and overrides the familiar, everyday view, the way in which projections put spaces into a new context – I think there will always be a plus in that.





# HIDDEN GEMS OF PÉCS

**P**écs offers visitors a variety of historical and cultural attractions. The city is home to the Cathedral, the Zsolnay Museum, the Pécs Basilica, the Bishop's Palace, and many other museums and galleries. Don't miss the TV tower either!

The city is close to the Mecsek Mountains, which offer a variety of hiking trails. The mountains are home to the Mecsek National Park, which is home to a variety of protected plant and animal species. Let yourself explore the forest, and don't forget to take a picture at Flóra pihenő!

The city is a wine region itself, but is also close to the Villányi wine region, which is one of Hungary's most famous wine regions.



## IMPRINT

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